



THE
ODYSSEY
OF
HOMER.

Translated by
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VOLUME THE SECOND.



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M.DCC.LX.





THE
FIFTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY





The A R G U M E N T.

The Departure of Ulysses from Calypso.

PALLAS in a Council of the Gods complains of the Detention of Ulysses in the Island of Calypso; whereupon Mercury is sent to command his removal. The seat of Calypso described. She consents with much difficulty, and Ulysses builds a vessel with his own hands, on which he embarks. Neptune overtakes him with a terrible tempest, in which he is shipwrecked, and in the last danger of death; till Leucothea a Sea-Goddes assists him, and after innumerable perils he gets ashore on Phæacia.



THE
* FIFTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY

THE saffron Morn, with early blushes spread,
Now rose refulgent from *Tithonus*' bed ;
With new-born day to gladden mortal fight,
And gild the courts of heav'n with sacred light.

* *Ulysses* makes his first entry in this book. It may be asked where properly is the beginning of the Action? It is not necessary that the beginning of the *Action* should be the beginning of the *Poem* ; there is a natural and an artificial order, and *Homer* makes use of the latter. The Action of the *Odyssey* properly begins neither with the Poem, nor with the appearance of *Ulysses* here, but with the relation he makes of his departure from *Troy* in the ninth book. *Bossu* has very judiciously remarked, that in the constitution of the fable, the



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Then met th' eternal Synod of the sky, 5
 Before the God who thunders from on high, }
 Supreme in might, sublime in Majesty.

Poet ought not to make the Departure of a Prince from his own country the foundation of his Poem, but his Return, and his stay in other places involuntary. For if the stay of *Ulysses* had been voluntary, he would have been guilty in some degree of all the disorders that happened during his absence. Thus in this book *Ulysses* first appears in a desolate Island, sitting in tears by the side of the ocean, and looking upon it as the obstacle to his return.

This artificial order is of great use; it cuts off all languishing and unentertaining incidents, and passes over those intervals of time that are void of action; it gives continuity to the story, and at first transports the Reader into the middle of the subject. In the beginning of the *Odyssey*, the Gods command *Mercury* to go down to the Island of *Ogygia*, and charge *Calypso* to dismiss *Ulysses* one would think the Poem was to end in the compass of a few lines, the Poet beginning the action so near the end of the story; and we wonder how he finds matter to fill up his Poem, in the little space of time that intervenes between his first appearance and re-establishment.

This book, as well as the first, opens with an assembly of the Gods. This is done to give an importance to his Poem, and to prepare the mind of the Reader to expect every thing that is great and noble, when Heaven is engaged in the care and protection of his Heroes. Both these Assemblies are placed very properly, so as not to interrupt the series of action: the first assembly of the Gods is only preparatory to introduce the action: and the second is no more than a bare transition from *Telemachus* to *Ulysses*; from the recital of the transactions in *Ithaca*, to what more immediately regards the person of *Ulysses*.

In the former council, both the Voyage of *Telemachus* and the Return of *Ulysses* were determined at the same time: the day



BOOK v. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 7

Pallas, to these, deplores th' unequal fates
Of wife *Ulysses*, and his toils relates ;
Her hero's danger touch'd the pitying Pow'r, 10
The Nymph's seducements, and the magick bow'r

Thus she began her plaint. Immortal *Jove* !
And you who fill the blissful seats above !
Let Kings no more with gentle mercy sway,
Or bless a people willing to obey, 15
But crush the nations with an iron rod,
And ev'ry Monarch be the scourge of God :
If from your thoughts *Ulysses* you remove,
Who rul'd his subjects with a father's love.
Sole in an isle, encircled by the main, 20
Abandon'd, banish'd from his native reign,

f that assembly is the first day both of the *principal action*, which is the return of *Ulysses*) and of the *incident*, which is the voyage of *Telemachus* ; with this difference, that the incident was immediately put in practice, by the descent of *Minerva* to *Ithaca* ; and the execution of it takes up the four preceding books ; whereas the principal action was only then prepared, and the execution deferred to the present book, where *Mercury* is actually sent to *Calypsso*.

Eustathius therefore judges rightly when he says, that in the first council, the safety alone of *Ulysses* was proposed ; but the means how to bring it about are here under consultation, which makes the necessity of the second council.



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Unblest he fights, detain'd by lawless charms,
 And press'd unwilling in *Calypso's* arms.
 Nor friends are there, nor vessels to convey,
 Nor oars to cut th' immeasurable way. 25
 And now fierce traitors, studious to destroy
 His only son, their ambush'd fraud employ ;
 Who, pious, following his great father's fame,
 To sacred *Pylos* and to *Sparta* came.

What words are these (reply'd the Pow'r who
 forms 30

The clouds of night, and darkens heav'n with
 storms)

Is not already in thy soul decreed,
 The chief's return shall make the guilty bleed ?
 What cannot Wisdom do ? Thou may'st restore
 The son in safety to his native shore ; 3
 While the fell foes who late in ambush lay,
 With fraud defeated measure back their way.

Then thus to *Hermes* the command was giv'n.
Hermes, thou chosen messenger of heav'n !
 Go, to the Nymph be these our orders borne : 40
 Tis *Jove's* decree *Ulysses* shall return ;



The patient man shall view his old abodes,
Nor help'd by mortal hand, nor guiding Gods :

ψ. 43. *Nor help'd by mortal hand, nor guiding Gods.*] This passage is intricate: why should *Jupiter* command *Ulysses* to return without the guidance either of man or God? *Ulysses* had been just declared the care of Heaven, why should he be thus suddenly abandoned? *Eustathius* answers, that it is spoken solely with respect to the voyage which he immediately undertakes. This indeed shews a reason why this command is given; if he had been under the guidance of a God, the shipwreck (that great incident which brings about the whole Catastrophe of the Poem) must have been prevented by his power; and as for men, where were they to be procured in a desolate island? What confirms this opinion is, that during the whole shipwreck of *Ulysses*, there is no interposition of a Deity, nor even of *Pallas*, who used to be his constant guardian; the reason is, because this command of *Jupiter* forbids all assistance to *Ulysses*: *Leucothea* indeed assists him, but it is not till he is shipwrecked. It appears further, that this interdiction respects only the voyage from *Ogygia*, because *Jupiter* orders that there shall be no assistance from man, ἔτι θεῶν πομπῇ, ἐτ' ἀνθρώπων; but *Ulysses* is transported from *Phæacia* to *Ithaca*, ἀνθρώπων πομπῇ, or by the assistance of the *Phæacians*, as *Eustathius* observes; and therefore what *Jupiter* here speaks has relation only to the present voyage. *Dacier* understands this to be meant of any *visible* assistance only: but this seems a collusion; for whether the Gods assist visibly or invisibly, the effects are the same; and a Deity unseen might have preserved *Ulysses* from storms, and directly guided him to his own country. But it was necessary for the design of *Homer*, that *Ulysses* should not sail directly home; if he had, there had been no room for the relation of his own adventures, and all those surprising narrations he makes to the *Phæacians*: *Homer* therefore, to bring about the shipwreck of *Ulysses*, withdraws the Gods.



In twice ten days shall fertile *Scheria* find,
 Alone, and floating to the wave and wind 4.
 The bold *Phæacians* there, whose haughty line
 Is mixt with Gods, half human, half divine,

ν. 45. *Alone, and floating to the wave.*] The word in the original is σχεδῖης; νηὸς, as *Eustathius* observes, is understood as it signifies, continues he, a small vessel made of one entire piece of wood, or a vessel about which little wood is used; is derived from σχεδόν, from being αἰτροσχεδίως συμπεπῆχθαι, i. e. compacted together with ease. *Hesychius* defines σχεδία τοιαῦτα μικρὰ ναῦς, ἢ ξύλα ἃ συνδέουσι, καὶ ἔτι πλέουσι: that is, a small bark, or float of wood which sailors bind together, and immediately use in navigation. This observation appeared to me very necessary, to take off an objection made upon a following passage in this book: the Criticks have thought it incredible that *Ulysses* should without any assistance build such a vessel, as *Homer* describes; but if we remember what kind of a vessel it is, it may be reconciled to probability.

ν. 46. — — — Whose haughty line
 Is mixt with Gods.]

The *Phæacians* were the inhabitants of *Scheria*, sometimes called *Drepanè*, afterwards *Corcyra*, now *Corfu*, in the possession of the *Venetians*. But it may be asked in what these people resemble the Gods? they are described as a most effeminate nation: whence then this God-like Quality? *Eustathius* answers, that is either from their undisturbed felicity, or from their divine quality of general benevolence: he prefers the latter; but from the general character of the *Phæacians*, I should prefer the former. *Homer* frequently describes the Gods as αἰεὶ ῥεῖα ζῶντες, the Gods that live in endless ease: this is suitable to the *Phæacians*, as will appear more fully in the sequel of the *Odyssey*. *Eustathius* remarks, that the Poet here gives us in a few lines the heads of the eight succeeding books;



Book v. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 11

The chief shall honour as some heav'nly guest,
 And swift transport him to his place of rest.
 His vessels loaded with a plenteous store 50
 Of brass, of vestures, and resplendent Ore ;
 (A richer prize than if his joyful Isle
 Receiv'd him charg'd with *Ilion's* noble spoil)
 His friends, his country, he shall see, tho' late ;
 Such is our sovereign Will, and such is Fate. 55
 He spoke. The God who mounts the winged
 winds

Fast to his feet the golden pinions binds,

and sure nothing can be a greater instance of *Homer's* art, than his building so noble an edifice upon so small a foundation : the plan is simple and unadorned, but he embellishes it with all the beauties in nature.

ψ. 56. *The God who mounts the winged winds.*] This is a noble description of *Mercury* ; the verses are lofty and sonorous. *Virgil* has inserted them in his *Æneis*, lib. iv. 240.

— — — “ pedibus talaria neſtit
 “ Aurea : quæ ſublimem alis, ſive æquora ſupra,
 “ Seu terram, rapido pariter cum flamine portant :
 “ Tum virgam capit : hæc animas ille evocat Orco
 “ Pallentes, alias ſub triſtia Tartara mittit ;
 “ Dat ſomnos adimitque, & lumina morte reſignat.

What is here ſaid of the rod of *Mercury*, is, as *Euſtathius* obſerves, an Allegory : it is intended to ſhew the force of eloquence, which has a power to calm, or excite, to raiſe a paſſion, or compoſe it : *Mercury* is the God of Eloquence,



That high thro' fields of air his flight sustain
O'er the wide earth, and o'er the boundless
main.

He grasps the wand that causes sleep to fly, 60
Or in soft slumber seals the wakeful eye :
Then shoots from heav'n to high *Picria's* steep,
And stoops incumbent on the rolling deep.
So wat'ry fowl, that seek their fishy food,
With wings expanded o'er the foaming flood, 65
Now sailing smooth the level surface sweep,
Now dip their pinions in the briny deep.

and he may very properly be said *θελγεῖν, καὶ ἀγείρειν*, to cool or inflame the passions according to the allegorical sense of these expressions.

ψ. 64. *So wat'ry fowl.*] *Eustathius* remarks, that this is a very just allusion ; had the Poet compared *Mercury* to an Eagle, though the comparison had been more noble, yet it had been less proper ; a sea-fowl most properly represents the passage of a Deity over the seas ; the comparison being adapted to the element.

Some ancient Criticks marked the last verse *τῷ ἵκελος, ἔς.* with an Obelisk, a sign that it ought to be rejected : they thought that the word *ἐχίσσατο* did not sufficiently express the swiftness of the flight of *Mercury* ; the word implies no more than *he was carried* : but this expression is applicable to any degree of swiftness ; for where is the impropriety, if we say, *Mercury* was borne along the seas with the utmost rapidity ? The word is most properly applied to a chariot, *ἐπὶ ὄχθῃ, ὃ ἐστὶν ἀρμαῖοι.* *Eustathius.*



Thus o'er the world of waters *Hermes* flew,
 'Till now the distant Island rose in view :
 Then swift ascending from the azure wave, 70
 He took the path that winded to the cave.
 Large was the Grot, in which the nymph he found,
 (The fair hair'd nymph with ev'ry beauty crown'd)

✧. 72. *The Nymph he found.*] *Homer* here introduces an Episode of *Calypso* : and as every incident ought to have some relation to the main design of the Poem, it may be asked what relation this bears to the other parts of it ? A very essential one the sufferings of *Ulysses* are the subject of the *Odyssey* : here we find him inclosed in an Island : all his calamities arise from his absence from his own country : *Calypso* then, who detains him, is the cause of all his calamities. It is with great judgment that the Poet feigns him to be restrained by a Deity, rather than a mortal. It might have appeared somewhat derogatory from the prudence and courage of *Ulysses*, not to have been able by art or strength to have freed himself from the power of a mortal : but by this conduct the Poet at once excuses his Hero, and aggravates his misfortunes : he is detained involuntarily, but it is a Goddess who detains him, and it is no disgrace for a man not to be able to overpower a Deity.

Bossu observes, that the art of Disguise is part of the character of *Ulysses* : now this is implied in the name of *Calypso*, which signifies *concealment*, or *secret*. The Poet makes his Hero stay seven whole years with this Goddess ; she taught him so well, that he afterwards lost no opportunities of putting her instructions in practice, and does nothing without Disguise.

Virgil has borrowed part of his description of *Circe* in the seventh book of the *Æneis*, from this of *Calypso*.



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She sat and sung ; the rocks resound her lays :
 The cave was brighten'd with a rising blaze : 75
 Cedar and frankincense, an od'rous pile,
 Flam'd on the hearth, and wide perfum'd the Isle ;
 While she with work and song the time divides,
 And thro' the loom the golden shuttle guides.
 Without the grot, a various silvan scene 80
 Appear'd around, and groves of living green ;

— — — “ ubi Solis filia lucos
 “ Affiduo resonet cantu, tectisque superbis
 “ Urit odoratam nocturna in lumina cedrum,
 “ Arguto tenues percurrens pectine telas.”

What I have here said shews likewise the necessity of this machine of *Mercury* : it is an established rule of *Horace*

“ Nec deus interfit, nisi dignus vindice nodus
 “ Inciderit :”

Calypso was a Goddess, and consequently all human means were insufficient to deliver *Ulysses*. There was therefore a necessity to have recourse to the Gods.

ÿ. 80. *The Bow'r of Calypso.*] It is impossible for a Painter to draw a more admirable rural Land scape: the bower of *Calypso* is the principal figure, surrounded with a shade of different trees: green meadows adorned with flowers, beautiful fountains, and vines loaded with clusters of Grapes, and birds hovering in the air, are seen in the liveliest colours in *Homer's* Poetry. But whoever observes the particular trees, plants, birds, &c. will find another beauty of propriety in this description, every part being adapted, and the whole scene drawn agreeable to a country situate by the sea.



Book v. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 15

Poplars and alders ever quiv'ring play'd,
 And nodding cypress form'd a fragrant shade ;
 On whose high branches, waving with the storm,
 The birds of broadest wing their mansion form, 85
 The chough, the sea-mew, the loquacious crow,
 And scream aloft, and skim the deeps below.
 Depending vines the shelving cavern screen,
 With purple clusters blushing thro' the green.
 Four limpid fountains from the clefts distil, 90
 And ev'ry fountain pours a sev'ral rill,
 In mazy windings wand'ring down the hill :
 Where bloomy meads with vivid greens were
 crown'd,
 And glowing violets threw odours round.
 A scene, where if a God shou'd cast his sight, 95
 A God might gaze, and wander with delight !

v. 89. *The purple clusters blushing thro' the green.*] *Eustathius* endeavours to fix the season of the year when *Ulysses* departed from that Island : he concludes it to be in the latter end of Autumn, or the beginning of Winter ; for *Calypso* is described as making use of a fire ; so is *Arete* in the sixth book, and *Eumæus* and *Ulysses* in other parts of the *Odyssey*. This gives us reason to conclude, that the Summer heats were past ; and what makes it still more probable is, that a Vine is in this place said to be loaded with Grapes, which plainly confines the season of the year to the Autumn.



Joy touch'd the messenger of heav'n : he stay'd
 Entranc'd, and all the blissful haunt survey'd.
 Him, ent'ring in the cave, *Calypso* knew ;
 For pow'rs celestial to each other's view 100
 Stand still confest, tho' distant far they lie
 To habitants of earth, or sea, or sky.
 But sad *Ulysses*, by himself apart,
 Pour'd the big sorrows of his swelling heart ;
 All on the lonely shore he sat to weep,
 And roll'd his eyes around the restless deep ;
 Tow'rd his lov'd coast he roll'd his eyes in vain,
 'Till dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.

v. 103. *But sad Ulysses, by himself apart.*] *Eustathius* imagines, that the Poet describes *Ulysses* absent from *Calypso*, to the end that *Calypso* might lay a seeming Obligation upon *Ulysses*, by appearing to dismiss him voluntarily : for *Ulysses* being absent, could not know that *Mercury* had commanded his Departure ; so that this favour appears to proceed from the sole kindness of the Goddess. *Dacier* dislikes this observation, and shews that Decency requires the absence of *Ulysses* ; if the Poet had described him in the Company of *Calypso*, it might have given suspicion of an amorous disposition, and he might seem content with his absence from his country : but the very nature of the Poem requires that he should be continually endeavouring to return to it : the Poet therefore with great judgment describes him agreeably to his character ; his mind is entirely taken up with his misfortunes, and neglecting all the pleasures which a Goddess could confer, he entertains himself with his own melancholy reflections, sitting in solitude upon the sea-shore.



BOOK V. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 17

Now graceful seated on her shining throne,
To *Hermes* thus the nymph divine begun. 110

God of the golden wand ! on what behest
Arriv'st thou here, an unexpected guest ?
Lov'd as thou art, thy free injunctions lay ;
'Tis mine, with joy and duty to obey.
Till now a stranger, in a happy hour 115
Approach, and taste the dainties of my bow'r.

Thus having spoke, the nymph the table
spread,
(Ambrosial cates, with Nectar rosy-red)
Hermes the hospitable rite partook,
Divine refection ! then recruited, spoke. 120

What mov'd this journey from my native sky,
A Goddess asks, nor can a God deny :
Hear then the truth. By mighty *Jove's* command
Unwilling, have I trod this pleasing land ;
For who, self-mov'd, with weary wing wou'd
sweep 125

Such length of ocean and unmeasur'd deep :
A world of waters ! far from all the ways
Where men frequent, or sacred altars blaze ?



18 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book v.

But to *Jove's* will submission we must pay ;
What pow'r so great, to dare to disobey ? 130

A man, he says, a man resides with thee,
Of all his kind most worn with misery :
The *Greeks* (whose arms for nine long years em-
ploy'd

Their force on *Ilion*, in the tenth destroy'd)
At length embarking in a luckless hour, 135
With conquest proud, incens'd *Minerva's* pow'r :
Hence on the guilty race her vengeance hurl'd
With storms pursued them thro' the liquid world.
There all his vessels sunk beneath the wave !
There all his dear companions found their
grave ! 140

Sav'd from the jaws of death by heav'n's decree,
The tempest drove him to these shores and thee.
Him, *Jove* now orders to his native lands
Straight to dismiss ; so Destiny commands :
Impatient Fate his near return attends, 145
And calls him to his country, and his friends.

Ev'n to her inmost soul the Goddess shook ;
Then thus her anguish and her passion broke.



BOOK v. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 19

Ungracious Gods ! with spite and envy curst !
 Still to your own ætherial race the worst ! 150
 Ye envy mortal and immortal joy,
 And love, the only sweet of life, destroy.
 Did ever Goddess by her charms engage
 A favour'd mortal, and not feel your rage ?
 So when *Aurora* fought *Orion's* love, 155
 Her joys disturb'd your blissful hours above,
 'Till in *Ortygia*, *Dian's* winged dart
 Had pierc'd the hapless hunter to the heart.

v. 155. *Orion*.] The love of *Calypso* to *Ulysses* might seem too bold a fiction, and contrary to all credibility, *Ulysses* being a mortal, she a Goddess : *Homer* therefore to soften the relation, brings in instances of the like passion, in *Orion* and *Iasion* ; and by this he fully justifies his own conduct, the Poet being at liberty to make use of any prevailing story, though it were all fable and fiction.

But why should the death of *Orion* be here ascribed to *Diana* ; whereas in other places she is said to exercise her power only over Women ? The reason is, she slew him for offering violence to her chastity ; for though *Homer* be silent about his crime, yet *Horace* relates it.

— — — “ Integræ
 “ Tentator Orion Dianæ
 “ Virgineâ domitus sagittâ.”

Eustathius gives another reason why *Aurora* is said to be in love with *Orion*. He was a great hunter, as appears from the eleventh book of the *Odyssey* ; and the morning or *Aurora* is most favourable to those diversions.



20 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book v.

So when the covert of the thrice-ear'd field
 Saw stately *Ceres* to her passion yield, 160
 Scarce could *Iäſion* taſte her heav'nly charms,
 But *Jove's* ſwift lightning ſcorch'd him in her arms.
 And is it now my turn, ye mighty pow'rs !
 Am I the envy of your bliſſful bow'rs ?
 A man, an outcaſt to the ſtorm and wave, 165
 It was my crime to pity, and to ſave ;

ψ. 161. *Scarce could Iäſion, &c.] Ceres* is here underſtood allegorically, to ſignify the earth; *Iäſion* was a great Huſbandman, and conſequently *Ceres* may eaſily be feigned to be in love with him: the thunderbolt with which he is ſlain ſignifies the exceſs of heat, which frequently diſappoints the hopes of the labourer. *Euſtathius.*

ψ. 165. *A man, an outcaſt to the ſtorm and wave,
 It was my crime to pity, and to ſave, &c.]*

Homer in this ſpeech of *Calypſo* ſhews very naturally how paſſion miſguides the underſtanding. She views her own cauſe in the moſt advantageous, but falſe light, and thence concludes, that *Jupiter* offers a piece of injuſtice in commanding the departure of *Ulyſſes*: ſhe tells *Mercury*, that it is ſhe who had preſerved his life, who had entertained him with affection, and offered him immortality; and would *Jupiter* thus repay her tenderneſs to *Ulyſſes*? Would *Jupiter* force him from a place where nothing was wanting to his happineſs, and expoſe him again to the like dangers from which ſhe had preſerved him? this was an Act of cruelty. But on the contrary, ſhe ſpeaks not one word concerning the truth of the cauſe: viz. that ſhe offered violence to the inclinations of *Ulyſſes*; that ſhe made him miſerable by detaining him, not only from his wife, but from his whole dominions; and ne-



BOOK v. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 21

When he who thunders rent his bark in twain,
 And sunk his brave companions in the main.
 Alone, abandon'd, in mid-ocean tost,
 The sport of winds, and driv'n from ev'ry
 coast, 170

Hither this Man of miseries I led,
 Receiv'd the friendless, and the hungry fed ;
 Nay promis'd (vainly promis'd !) to bestow
 Immortal life, exempt from age and woe. 174

'Tis past — and *Jove* decrees he shall remove ;
 Gods as we are, we are but slaves to *Jove*.
 Go then he may ; (he must, if He ordain,
 Try all those dangers, all those deeps, again)
 But never, never shall *Calypso* send 179

To toils like these, her husband and her friend.
 What ships have I, what sailors to convey,
 What oars to cut the long laborious way ?
 Yet, I'll direct the safest means to go :
 That last advice is all I can bestow.

ver considers that *Jupiter* is just in delivering him from his captivity. This is a very lively, though unhappy picture of human nature, which is too apt to fall into error, and then endeavours to justify an error by a seeming reason. *Dacier*.



22 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book v.

To her, the Pow'r who bears the charming rod.
 Dismiss the Man, nor irritate the God; 186
 Prevent the rage of him who reigns above,
 For what so dreadful as the wrath of *Jove*?
 Thus having said, he cut the cleaving sky,
 And in a moment vanish'd from her eye. 190
 The Nymph, obedient to divine command,
 To seek *Ulysses*, pac'd along the sand.
 Him pensive on the lonely beach she found,
 With streaming eyes in briny torrents drown'd,
 And inly pining for his native shore; 195
 For now the soft Enchantress pleas'd no more :
 For now, reluctant, and constrain'd by charms,
 Absent he lay in her desiring arms,

†. 198. *Absent he lay in her desiring arms.*] This passage has fallen under the severe censure of the Criticks, they condemn it as an act of conjugal infidelity, and a breach of Morality in *Ulysses*: it would be sufficient to answer, that a Poet is not obliged to draw a perfect character in the person of his Hero: perfection is not to be found in human life, and consequently ought not to be ascribed to it in Poetry: neither *Achilles* nor *Æneas* are perfect characters: *Æneas* in particular, is as guilty, with respect to *Dido*, in the desertion of her, (for *Virgil* tells us they were married, *connubio jungam stabili*) as *Ulysses* can be imagined to be by the most severe Critick, with respect to *Calypso*.



BOOK v. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 23

In slumber wore the heavy night away,
On rocks and shores consum'd the tedious day ;
There sat all desolate, and sigh'd alone, 201
'With echoing sorrows made the mountains groan,
And roll'd his eyes o'er all the restless main,
'Till dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd
again.

Here, on the musing mood the Goddess prest,
Approaching soft; and thus the chief addrest. 206
Unhappy man ! to wasting woes a prey,
No more in sorrows languish life away :
Free as the winds I give thee now to rove —
Go, fell the timber of yon' lofty grove, 210

But those who have blamed this passage, form their judgments from the morality of these ages, and not from the Theology of the Ancients: Polygamy was then allowed, and even concubinage, without being esteemed any breach of conjugal fidelity: if this be not admitted, the heathen Gods are as guilty as the heathen Heroes, and *Jupiter* and *Ulysses* are equally criminals.

This very passage shews the sincere affection which *Ulysses* retained for his wife *Penelope*; even a Goddess cannot persuade him to forget her; his person is in the power of *Calypso*, but his heart is with *Penelope*. Tully had this book of *Homer* in his thought when he said of *Ulysses*, *Vetulam suam prætulit immortalitati*.



24 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book v

And form a Raft, and build the rising ship,
 Sublime to bear thee o'er the gloomy deep.
 To store the vessel let the care be mine,
 With water from the rock, and rosy wine,
 And life-sustaining bread, and fair array, 215
 And prosp'rous gales to waft thee on the way.
 These if the Gods with my desires comply,
 (The Gods alas more mighty far than I,
 And better skill'd in dark events to come).

In peace shall land thee at thy native home. 220

With sighs, *Ulysses* heard the words she spoke,
 Then thus his melancholy silence broke.
 Some other motive, Goddess ! sways thy mind,
 (Some close design, or turn of womankind)

v. 222. *Then thus his melancholy silence broke.*] It may be asked what occasions this conduct in *Ulysses*? he has long been desirous to return to his country, why then his melancholy at the proposal of it? this proceeds from his apprehensions of insincerity in *Calypso*: he had long been unable to obtain his dismissal with the most urgent entreaties: this voluntary kindness therefore seems suspicious. He is ignorant that *Jupiter* had commanded his departure, and therefore fears lest his obstinate desire of leaving her should have provoked her to destroy him, under a shew of complying with his inclinations. This is an instance that *Ulysses* is not only wise in extricating himself from difficulties, but cautious in guarding against dangers.



BOOK v. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 25

Nor my return the end, nor this the way, 225

On a slight Raft to pass the swelling sea

Huge, horrid, vast ! where scarce in safety fails

The best built ship, tho *Jove* inspire the gales.

The bold proposal how shall I fulfill ;

Dark as I am, unconscious of thy will ? 230

Swear then, thou mean'st not what my soul fore-
bodes ;

Swear by the solemn oath that binds the Gods.

Him, while he spoke, with smiles *Calypso* ey'd,
And gently grasp'd his hand, and thus reply'd.

This shews thee, friend, by old experience
taught, 235

And learn'd in all the wiles of human thought.

How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise ?

But hear, oh earth, and hear ye sacred skies !

v. 238. *But hear, oh earth, and hear, ye sacred skies !*] The oath of *Calypso* is introduced with the utmost solemnity. *Rapin* allows it to be an instance of true sublimity. The Ancients attested all nature in their oaths, that all nature might conspire to punish their perjuries. *Virgil* has imitated this passage, but has not copied the full beauty of the original.

“ *Esto nunc sol testis, & hæc mihi terra precanti.*”

It is the remark of *Grotius*, that the like expression is found in *Deuteronomy*, *Hear, oh ye heavens, the words that I speak,*



26 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK V.

And thou, oh *Styx* ! whose formidable floods
Glide thro' the shades, and bind th' attesting Gods !
No form'd design, no meditated end 241
Lurks in the counsel of thy faithful friend ;
Kind the persuasion, and sincere my aim ;
The same my practice, were my fate the same.
Heav'n has not curst me with a heart of steel, 245
But giv'n the sense, to pity, and to feel.

Thus having said, the Goddess march'd before :
He trod her footsteps in the sandy shore.
At the cool cave arriv'd, they took their state ;
He fill'd the throne where *Mercury* had sat, 250
For him, the Nymph a rich repast ordains,
Such as the mortal life of man sustains ;

and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. Which may almost literally be rendered by this verse of *Homer*.

Ἴδω νῦν τόδε γαῖα, καὶ ἑβανὸς εὐρύς ὑπερθεύ.

ψ. 251. *For him, the Nymph a rich repast ordains.*] The Passion of Love is nowhere described in all *Homer*, but in this passage between *Calypso* and *Ulysses* ; and we find that the Poet is not unsuccessful in drawing the tender, as well as the fiercer passions. This seemingly trifling circumstance is an instance of it ; love delights to oblige, and the least offices receive a value from the person who performs them : this is the reason why *Calypso* serves *Ulysses* with her own hands : her Damscels attend her, but love makes it a pleasure to her to attend *Ulysses*. *Eustathius*.



Before herself were plac'd the cates divine,
Ambrosial banquet, and celestial wine.
Their hunger satiate, and their thirst repress, 255
Thus spoke *Calypso* to her God-like guest.

Ulysses ! (with a sigh she thus began)
O sprung from Gods ! In wisdom more than man.
Is then thy home the passion of thy heart ?
Thus wilt thou leave me, are we thus to part ? 260
Farewel ! and ever joyful may'st thou be,
Nor break the transport with one thought of me.
But ah *Ulysses* ! wert thou given to know
What Fate yet dooms thee, yet, to undergo ;

Calypso shews more fondness for *Ulysses*, than *Ulysses* for *Calypso* : indeed *Ulysses* had been no less than seven years in the favour of that Goddess ; it was a kind of matrimony, and husbands are not altogether so fond as lovers. But the true reason is, a more tender behaviour had been contrary to the character of *Ulysses* ; it is necessary that his stay should be by constraint, that he should continually be endeavouring to return to his own country ; and consequently to have discovered too great a degree of satisfaction in any thing during his absence, had outraged his character. His return is the main hinge upon which the whole *Odyssey* turns, and therefore no pleasure, not even a Goddess, ought to divert him from it.

v. 263. *But ah Ulysses ! wert thou given to know
What Fate yet dooms thee.]*

This is another instance of the tyranny of the passion of love : *Calypso* had received a command to dismiss *Ulysses* ; *Mercury*



28 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book v.

Thy heart might settle in this scene of ease, 265
And ev'n these flighted charms might learn to please.

A willing Goddess and immortal life,
Might banish from thy mind an absent wife.

Am I inferiour to a mortal dame?

Less soft my feature, less august my frame? 270

Or shall the daughters of mankind compare

Their earth-born beauties with the heav'nly fair?

Alas! for this (the prudent man replies)

Against *Ulysses* shall thy anger rise?

Lov'd and ador'd, oh Goddess as thou art, 275

Forgive the weakness of a human heart.

Tho' well I see thy graces far above

The dear, tho' mortal, object of my love,

had laid before her the fatal consequences of her refusal, and she had promised to send him away; but her love here again prevails over her reason; she frames excuses still to detain him, and though she dares not keep him, she knows not how to part with him. This is a true picture of nature; Love this moment resolves, the next breaks these resolutions: she had promised to obey *Jupiter*, in not detaining *Ulysses*; but she endeavours to persuade *Ulysses* not to go away.

x. 277. *Tho' well I see thy graces far above*

The dear, tho' mortal, object of my love.]

Ulysses shews great address in this answer to *Calypso*; he softens the severity of it, by first asking a favourable acceptance



BOOK V. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 29

Of youth eternal well the diff'rence know,
 And the short date of fading charms below ; 280
 Yet ev'ry day, while absent thus I roam,
 I languish to return, and die at home.
 Whate'er the Gods shall destine me to bear
 In the black ocean, or the wat'ry war,
 'Tis mine to master with a constant mind ; 285
 Enur'd to perils, to the worst resign'd.
 By seas, by wars, so many dangers run ;
 Still I can suffer : their high will be done !

Thus while he spoke, the beamy sun descends,
 And rising Night her friendly shade extends. 290
 To the close grot the lonely pair remove,
 And slept delighted with the gifts of love.
 When rosy morning call'd them from their rest,
Ulysses robed him in the cloak and vest.
 The nymph's fair head a veil transparent grac'd,
 Her swelling loins a radiant Zone embrac'd 296

of what he is about to say ; he calls her his adored Goddess, and places *Penelope* in every degree below the perfections of *Calypso*. As it is the nature of women not to endure a rival, *Ulysses* assigns the desire of his return to another cause than the love of *Penelope*, and ascribes it solely to the love he bears his country. *Erstatius*.



30 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK v.

With flow'rs of gold : an under robe, unbound,
 In snowy waves flow'd glitt'ring on the ground.
 Forth-issuing thus, she gave him first to wield
 A weighty ax, with truest temper steel'd, 300
 And double edg'd ; the handle smooth and plain,
 Wrought of the clouded olive's easy grain ;
 And next, a wedge to drive with sweepy sway :
 Then to the neighbouring forest led the way.
 On the lone Island's utmost verge there stood 305
 Of poplars, pines, and firs, a lofty wood,
 Whose leafless summits to the skies aspire,
 Scorch'd by the sun, or fear'd by heav'nly fire :
 (Already dry'd.) These pointing out to view,
 The Nymph just shew'd him, and with tears
 withdrew. 310

Now toils the Hero ; trees on trees o'erthrown
 Fall crackling round him, and the forest groan :

✱. 311, &c. *Ulysses builds his ship.*] This passage has fallen under censure, as outraging all probability : *Rapin* believes it to be impossible for one man alone to build so compleat a vessel in the compass of four days ; and perhaps the same opinion might lead *Bossu* into a mistake, who allows twenty days to *Ulysses* in building it ; he applies the word *εἴκοσι*, or *twenty*, to the days, which ought to be applied to the trees ; *δέσφρα* is understood, for the Poet immediately after declares



BOOK v. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 31

Sudden, full twenty on the plain are strow'd,
 And lopp'd, and lighten'd of their branchy load.
 At equal angles these dispos'd to join, 315
 He smooth'd and squar'd 'em, by the rule and line.
 (The wimbles for the work *Calypso* found)
 With those he pierc'd 'em, and with clinchers
 bound.

that the whole was compleated in the space of four days; neither is there any thing incredible in the description. I have observed already that this vessel is but *Σχεδία*, a *Float*, or *Raft*; it is true, *Ulysses* cuts down twenty trees to build it; this may seem too great a provision of materials for so small an undertaking: but why should we imagine these to be large trees? The description plainly shews the contrary, for it had been impossible to have felled twenty large trees in the space of four days, much more to have built a vessel proportionable to such materials: but the vessel was but small, and consequently such were the trees. *Homer* calls these *dry trees*; this is not inserted without reason, for green wood is unfit for Navigation.

Homer in this passage shews his skill in Mechanicks; a shipwright could not have described a vessel more exactly; but what is chiefly valuable is the insight it gives us to what degree this art of ship-building was then arrived: we find likewise what use Navigators made of Astronomy in those ages; so that this passage deserves a double regard, as a fine piece of Poetry, and a valuable remain of Antiquity.

v. 317. (*The wimbles for the work Calypso found.*) And

v. 329. *Thy loom, Calypso! for the future sails
 Supply'd the cloth.*]

It is remarkable that *Calypso* brings the tools to *Ulysses* at several times: this is another instance of the nature of Love;



32 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK V.

Long and capacious as a shipwright forms 319
 Some bark's broad bottom to out-ride the storms,
 So large he built the Raft : then ribb'd it strong
 From space to space, and nail'd the planks along ;
 These form'd the sides : the deck he fashion'd last ;
 Then o'er the vessel rais'd the taper mast,
 With crossing fail-yards dancing in the wind ; 325
 And to the helm the guiding rudder join'd.
 (With yielding osiers fenc'd, to break the force
 Of surging waves, and steer the steady course)
 Thy loom, *Calypso* ! for the future fails
 Supply'd the cloth, capacious of the gales. 330

it seeks opportunities to be in the company of the beloved person. *Calypso* is an instance of it : she frequently goes away, and frequently returns : she delays the time, by not bringing all the implements at once to *Ulysses* ; so that though she cannot divert him from the resolutions of leaving her, yet she protracts his stay.

It may be necessary to make some observation in general upon this passage of *Calypso* and *Ulysses*. Mr. *Dryden* has been very severe upon it. “ What are the tears, says he, “ of *Calypso* for being left, to the fury and death of *Dido* ? “ Where is there the whole process of her passion, and all “ its violent effects to be found, in the languishing Episode “ of the *Odyssey* ? ” Much be said in vindication of *Homer* ; there is a wide difference between the characters of *Dido* and *Calypso* ; *Calypso* is a Goddess, and consequently not liable to the same passions, as an enraged woman : yet disappointed



With stays and cordage last he rigg'd the ship,
And, roll'd on levers, lanch'd her in the deep.

love being always an outrageous passion, *Homer* makes her break out into blasphemies against *Jupiter* and all the Gods. “But the same process of love is not found in *Homer* as in “*Virgil*,” it is true, and *Homer* had been very injudicious if he had inserted it. The time allows it not; it was necessary for *Homer* to describe the conclusion of *Calypso*'s passion, not the beginning or process of it. It was necessary to carry on the main design of the Poem, viz. the Departure of *Ulysses*, in order to his re-establishment; and not amuse the Reader with a detail of a passion that was so far from contributing to the end of the Poem, that it was the greatest impediment to it. If the Poet had found an enlargement necessary to his design, had he attempted a full description of the passion, and then failed, Mr. *Dryden*'s Criticism had been judicious. *Virgil* had a fair opportunity to expatiate, nay, the occasion required it, inasmuch as the love of *Dido* contributed to the design of the Poem; it brought about her assistance to *Æneas*, and the preservation of his companions; and consequently the copiousness of *Virgil* is as judicious as the conciseness of *Homer*. I allow *Virgil*'s to be a masterpiece: perhaps no images are more happily drawn in all that Poet; but the Passages in the two Authors are not similar, and consequently admit of no comparison: would it not have been insufferable in *Homer*, to have stepped seven years backward, to describe the process of *Calypso*'s passion, when the very nature of the Poem requires that *Ulysses* should immediately return to his own country? ought the action to be suspended for a fine description? But an opposite conduct was judicious in both the Poets, and therefore *Virgil* is commendable for giving us the whole process of a love-passion in *Dido*, *Homer* for only relating the conclusion of it in *Calypso*. I will only add, that *Virgil* has borrowed his Machinery from *Homer*, and that the Departure of *Æneas* and *Ulysses* is brought about by the command of *Jupiter*, and the descent of *Mercury*.



34 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book v.

Four days were past, and now the work compleat,

Shone the fifth morn : when from her sacred seat
The nymph dismiss him, (od'rous garments
giv'n)

335

And bath'd in fragrant oils that breath'd of heav'n :
Then fill'd two goat-skins with her hands divine,
With water one, and one with fable wine :

Of ev'ry kind, provisions heav'd aboard ;
And the full decks with copious viands stor'd. 340

The Goddess, last, a gentle breeze supplies,
To curl old Ocean, and to warm the skies.

And now rejoicing in the prosp'rous gales,
With beating heart *Ulysses* spreads his sails ;

ψ. 344. — — — *Ulysses spreads his sails.*] It is observable that the Poet passes over the parting of *Calypso* and *Ulysses* in silence ; he leaves it to be imagined by the Reader, and prosecutes his main action. Nothing but a cold compliment could have proceeded from *Ulysses*, he being overjoyed at the prospect of returning to his country : it was therefore judicious in *Homer* to omit the relation ; and not draw *Calypso* in tears, and *Ulysses* in a transport of joy. Besides, it was necessary to shorten the Episode : the commands of *Jupiter* were immediately to be obeyed ; and the story being now turned to *Ulysses*, it was requisite to put him immediately upon action, and describe him endeavouring to re-establish his own affairs, which is the whole design of the *Odyssey*.



BOOK V. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 35

Plac'd at the helm he sat, and mark'd the skies,
 Nor clos'd in sleep his ever-watchful eyes. 346
 There view'd the *Pleiads*, and the northern Team,
 And great *Orion's* more refulgent beam,
 To which, around the axle of the sky
 The Bear revolving, points his golden eye: 350
 Who shines exalted on th' ætherial plain,
 Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.
 Far on the left those radiant fires to keep
 The Nymph directed, as he sail'd the deep.
 Full sev'nteen nights he cut the foamy way; 355
 The distant land appear'd the following Day:

*. 355. *Full sev'nteen nights he cut the foamy way.*] It may seem incredible that one person should be able to manage a vessel seventeen days without any assistance; but *Eustathius* vindicates *Homer* by an instance that very much resembles this of *Ulysses*. A certain *Pamphylian* being taken prisoner, and carried to *Tamiathis* (afterwards *Damietta*) in *Ægypt*, continued there several years; but being continually desirous to return to his country, he pretends a skill in sea affairs: this succeeds, and he is immediately employed in Maritime business, and permitted the liberty to follow it according to his own inclination, without any inspection. He made use of this opportunity, and furnishing himself with a sail, and provisions for a long voyage, committed himself to the sea all alone; he crossed that vast extent of waters that lies between *Ægypt* and *Pamphylia*, and arrived safely in his own country: in memory of this prodigious event he changed his name,



36 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK V

Then swell'd to fight *Phæacia's* dusky coast,
And woody mountains, half in vapours lost :
That lay before him, indistinct and vast,
Like a broad shield amid the wat'ry waste. 360

But him, thus voyaging the deeps below,
From far, on *Solymé's* aerial brow,

and was called *μονοναύτης*, or the *sole sailor* ; and the family was not extinct in the days of *Eustathius*.

It may not be improper to observe, that this description of *Ulysses* sailing alone, is a demonstration of the smallness of his vessel ; for it is impossible that a large one could be managed by a single person. It is indeed said that twenty trees were taken down for the vessel, but this does not imply that all the trees were made use of, but only so much of them as was necessary to his purpose.

ψ. 360. *Like a broad shield amid the wat'ry waste.*] This expression gives a very lively idea of an island of small extent, that is of a form more long than large : *Aristarchus*, instead of *ἑνὸν*, writes *ἰσνὸν*, or resembling a *Fig* ; others tells us, that *ἑνὸν* is used by the *Illyrians* to signify *ἄχλυν*, or a *Mist* ; this likewise very well represents the first appearance of land to those that sail at a distance ; it appears indistinct and confused, or as it is here expressed, like a *Mist*. *Eustathius*.

ψ. 362. *From Solymé's aerial brow.*] There is some difficulty in this passage. *Strabo*, as *Eustathius* observes, affirms that the expression of *Neptune's* seeing *Ulysses* from the mountain of *Solymé*, is to be taken in a general sense, and not to denote the *Solymæan* mountains in *Pisidia* ; but other eastern mountains that bear the same appellation. In propriety, the *Solymæans* inhabit the summits of mount *Taurus*, from *Lycia* even to *Pisidia* ; these were very distant from the passage of *Neptune* from the *Æthiopians*, and consequently could not be the mountains intended by *Homer* ; we must therefore



BOOK v. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 37

The King of Ocean saw, and seeing burn'd,
 (From *Æthiopia's* happy climes return'd)
 The raging Monarch shook his azure head, 365
 And thus in secret to his soul he said.

Heav'ns! how uncertain are the Pow'rs on high?
 Is then revers'd the sentence of the sky,
 In one man's favour; while a distant guest
 I shar'd secure the *Æthiopian* feast? 370
 Behold how near *Phæacia's* land he draws!
 The land, affix'd by Fate's eternal laws
 To end his toils. Is then our anger vain?
 No; if this sceptre yet commands the main.

He spoke, and high the forky Trident hurl'd, 375
 Rolls clouds on clouds, and stirs the wat'ry world,

have recourse to the preceding assertion of *Strabo*, for a solution of the difficulty. *Dacier* endeavours to explain it another way; who knows, says she, but that the name of *Solymean* was anciently extended to all very elevated mountains? *Bochart* affirms, that the word *Solimy* is derived from the Hebrew *Selem*, or *Darkness*; why then might not this be a general appellation? But this is all conjecture, and it is much more probable that such a name should be given to some mountains by way of distinction and emphatically, from some peculiar and extraordinary quality; than extend itself to all very lofty mountains, which could only introduce confusion and error.



38 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK V.

At once the face of earth and sea deforms,
 Swells all the winds, and rouses all the storms.
 Down rush'd the night: east, west, together roar;
 And south, and north, roll mountains to the shore;
 Then shook the Hero, to despair resign'd, 381
 And question'd thus his yet-unconquer'd mind.

Wretch that I am! what farther Fates attend
 This life of toils, and what my destin'd end?
 Too well alas! the island Goddess knew, 385
 On the black sea what perils shou'd ensue.
 New horrors now this destin'd head enclose;
 Unfill'd is yet the measure of my woes;
 With what a cloud the brows of heav'n are crown'd?
 What raging winds? what roaring waters round?
 'Tis Jove himself the swelling tempest rears; 391
 Death, present death on ev'ry side appears.
 Happy! thrice happy! who, in battle slain,
 Prest, in *Atrides'* cause, the *Trojan* plain:

ψ. 393. *Happy! thrice happy! who, in battle slain,
 Prest, in Atrides' cause, the Trojan plain.]*

Plutarch in his *Symposiacks* relates a memorable story concerning *Memmius*, the *Roman* General: when he had sacked the *City Corinth*, and made slaves of those who survived the ruin



Oh ! had I dy'd before that well-fought wall ; 395
 Had some distinguish'd day renown'd my fall ;
 (Such as was that, when show'rs of jav'lines fled
 From conqu'ring *Troy* around *Achilles* dead)

of it, he commanded one of the youths of a liberal education to write down some sentence in his presence, according to his own inclinations. The youth immediately wrote this passage from *Homer*.

Happy ! thrice happy ! who, in battle slain,
 Preft, in *Atrides*' cause, the *Trojan* plain.

Memmius immediately burst into tears, and gave the youth and all his relations their liberty.

Virgil has translated this passage in the first book of his *Æneis*. The storm and the behaviour of *Æneas* are copied exactly from it. The storm, in both the Poets, is described concisely, but the images are full of terrour ; *Homer* leads the way, and *Virgil* treads in his steps without any deviation. *Ulysses* falls into lamentation, so does *Æneas* : *Ulysses* wishes he had found a nobler death, so does *Æneas* : this discovers a bravery of spirit, they lament not that they are to die, but only the inglorious manner of it. This fully answers an objection that has been made both against *Homer* and *Virgil*, who have been blamed for describing their Heroes with such an air of mean-spiritedness. Drowning was esteemed by the Ancients an accursed death, as it deprived their bodies of the rites of Sepulture ; it is therefore no wonder that this kind of death was greatly dreaded, since it barred their entrance into the happy regions of the dead for many hundreds of years.

v. 397. (*Such as was that, when show'rs of jav'lines fled*

From conqu'ring Troy around Achilles dead.)]

These words have relation to an Action, no where described in the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*. When *Achilles* was slain by the treachery of *Paris*, the *Trojans* made a sally to gain his body,



40 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK V.

All *Greece* had paid me solemn fun'rals then,
 And spread my glory with the sons of men. 400
 A shameful fate now hides my hapless head,
 Un-wept, un-noted, and for ever dead !

A mighty wave rush'd o'er him as he spoke,
 The Raft it cover'd, and the mast it broke ; 404
 Swept from the deck, and from the rudder torn,
 Far on the swelling surge the chief was borne :
 While by the howling tempest rent in twain
 Flew sail and sail-yards rattling o'er the main.
 Long press'd, he heav'd beneath the weighty
 wave,

Clogg'd by the cumbrous vest *Calypso* gave.: 410
 At length emerging, from his nostrils wide
 And gushing mouth, effus'd the briny tide,
 Ev'n then not mindless of his last retreat,
 He seiz'd the Raft, and leapt into his seat, 414

but *Ulysses* carried it off upon his shoulders, while *Ajax* protected him with his shield. The war of *Troy* is not the subject of the *Iliad*, and therefore relates not the death of *Achilles* ; but, as *Longinus* remarks, he inserts many Actions in the *Odyssey* which are the sequel of the story of the *Iliad*. This conduct has a very happy effect ; he aggrandizes the character of *Ulysses* by these short histories, and has found out the way to make him praise himself, without vanity.



Strong with the fear of death. The rolling flood
 Now here, now there, impell'd the floating wood.
 As when a heap of gather'd thorns is cast
 Now to, now fro, before th' autumnal blast;
 Together clung, it rolls around the field ;
 So roll'd the Float, and so its texture held : 420
 And now the south, and now the north, bear sway, }
 And now the east the foamy floods obey, }
 And now the west-wind whirls it o'er the sea. }

The wand'ring Chief, with toils on toils oppress'd,
Leucothea saw, and pity touch'd her breast : 425

*. 424. *The wand'ring Chief, with toils on toils oppress'd,
 Leucothea saw, and pity touch'd her breast.]*

It is not probable that *Ulysses* could escape so great a danger by his own strength alone ; and therefore the Poet introduces *Leucothea* to assist in his preservation. But it may be asked, if this is not contradictory to the command of *Jupiter* in the beginning of the book ? *Ulysses* is there forbid all assistance either from Men or Gods ; whence then is it that *Leucothea* preserves him ? The former passage is to be understood to imply an interdiction only of all assistance, until *Ulysses* was shipwrecked ; he was to suffer, not to die : thus *Pallas* afterwards calms the storm ; she may be imagined to have a power over the winds, as she is the daughter of *Jupiter*, who denotes the Air, according to the observation of *Eustathius* : here *Leucothea* is very properly introduced to preserve *Ulysses* ; she is a Sea-Goddes, and had been a mortal, and therefore interests herself in the cause of a mortal.



42 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK V.

(Herself a mortal once, of *Cadmus*' strain,
But now an azure sister of the main)
Swift as a Sea-mew springing from the flood,
All radiant on the Raft the Goddess stood :
Then thus address'd him. Thou, whom heav'n
decrees

430

To *Neptune*'s wrath, stern Tyrant of the Seas,
(Unequal contest ;) not his rage and pow'r,
Great as he is, such virtue shall devour.
What I suggest thy wisdom will perform ;
Forfake thy float, and leave it to the storm ; 435
Strip off thy garments ; *Neptune*'s fury brave
With naked strength, and plunge into the wave.
To reach *Pheacia* all thy nerves extend,
There Fate decrees thy miseries shall end.
This heav'nly Scarf beneath thy bosom bind, 440
And live ; give all thy terrours to the wind.

*. 440. *This heav'nly Scarf beneath thy bosom bind.*] This passage may seem extraordinary, and the Poet be thought to preserve *Ulysses* by incredible means. What virtue could there be in this Scarf against the violence of storms ? *Eustathius* very well answers this objection. It is evident that the belief of the power of Amulets or Charms prevailed in the times of *Homer* ; thus *Moly* is used by *Ulysses* as a preservative



BOOK V. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 43

Soon as thy arms the happy shore shall gain,
Return the gift, and cast it in the main;
Observe my orders, and with heed obey,
Cast it far off, and turn thy eyes away. 445

With that, her hand the sacred veil bestows,
Then down the deeps she div'd from whence she
rose;

A moment snatch'd the shining form away,
And all was cover'd with the curling sea. 449

Struck with amaze, yet still to doubt inclin'd,
He stands suspended, and explores his mind.

against Fascination, and some charm may be supposed to be implied in the *Zone* or *Cestus* of *Venus*. Thus *Ulysses* may be imagined to have worn a scarf, or cincture, as a preservative against the perils of the sea. They consecrated antiently *Votiva*, as tablets, &c. in the temples of their Gods: so *Ulysses*, wearing a *Zone* consecrated to *Leucothea*, may be said to receive it from the hands of that Goddess. *Eustathius* observes, that *Leucothea* did not appear in the Form of a Bird, for then how should she speak, or how bring this cincture or scarf? The expression has relation only to the manner of her rising out of the Sea, and descending into it; the Action, not the Person, is intended to be represented. Thus *Minerva* is said in the *Odyssey*, to fly away, ἄρως ὡς ἀρόπαια, not in the form, but with the swiftness of an Eagle. Most of the translators have rendered this passage ridiculously; they describe her in the real form of a sea-fowl, though she speaks, and gives her Scarf. So the version of *Hobbs*:

She spoke, in figure of a Water-hen.



44 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book v.

What shall I do ? Unhappy me ! who knows
 But other Gods intend me other woes ?
 Whoe'er thou art, I shall not blindly join
 Thy pleaded reason, but consult with mine : 455
 For scarce in ken appears that distant Isle
 Thy voice foretells me shall conclude my toil.
 Thus then I judge ; while yet the planks sus-
 tain
 The wild waves fury, here I fix'd remain

v. 454. — — — *I shall not blindly join*
Thy pleaded reason — — —]

Eustathius observes, that this passage is a lesson to instruct us, that second reflections are preferable to our first thoughts ; and the Poet maintains the character of *Ulysses* by describing him thus doubtful and cautious. But is not *Ulysses* too incredulous, who will not believe a Goddess ? and disobedient to her, by not committing himself to the seas ? *Leucothea* does not confine *Ulysses* to an immediate compliance with her injunctions : she commands him to forsake the Raft, but leaves the Time to his own discretion : and *Ulysses* might very justly be somewhat incredulous, when he knew that *Neptune* was his enemy, and contriving his destruction. The doubts therefore of *Ulysses* are the doubts of a wise man : but then, is not *Ulysses* described with a greater degree of prudence, than the Goddess ? She commands him to leave the Raft, he chuses to make use of it till he arrives nearer the shores. *Eustathius* directly ascribes more wisdom to *Ulysses* than to *Leucothea*. This may appear too partial ; it is sufficient to observe, that the command of *Leucothea* was general, and left the manner of it to his own prudence.



BOOK V. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 45

But when their texture to the tempest yields, 460
I lanch advent'rous on the liquid fields,
Join to the help of Gods the strength of man,
And take this method, since the best I can.

While thus his thoughts an anxious council
hold,

The raging God a wat'ry mountain roll'd ; 465
Like a black sheet the whelming billow spread,
Burst q'er the float, and thunder'd on his head.
Planks, Beams, dis-parted fly : the scatter'd wood
Rolls diverse, and in fragments strows the flood.
So the rude *Boreas*, o'er the field new-shorn, 470
Tosses and drives the scatter'd heaps of corn.
And now a single beam the Chief bestrides ;
There, pois'd a-while above the bounding tides,
His limbs dis-cumbers of the clinging vest,
And binds the sacred cincture round his breast : 475
Then prone on Ocean in a moment flung,
Stretch'd wide his eager arms, and shot the seas
along.

All naked now, on heaving billows laid,
Stern *Neptune* ey'd him, and contemptuous said :



46 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book v.

Go, learn'd in woes, and other woes essay! 480

Go, wander helpless on the wat'ry way:

Thus, thus find out the destin'd shore, and then
(If *Jove* ordains it) mix with happier men.

Whate'er thy Fate, the ills our wrath could raise
Shall last remember'd in thy best of days. 485

This said, his sea-green steeds divide the foam,
And reach high *Ægæ* and the tow'ry dome.

Now, scarce withdrawn the fierce Earth-shak-
ing pow'r,

Jove's daughter *Pallas* watch'd the fav'ring hour,
Back to their caves she bade the winds to fly, 490
And hush'd the blust'ring brethren of the sky.

The drier blasts alone of *Boreas* sway,

And bear him soft on broken waves away;

With gentle force impelling to that shore,

Where Fate has destin'd he shall toil no more. 495

And now two nights, and now two days were past,

Since wide he wander'd on the wat'ry waste;

ψ. 496. *And now two nights, and now two days were past.*] It may be thought incredible that any person should be able to contend so long with a violent storm, and at last survive it: it is allowed that this could scarce be done by the natu-



BOOK v. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 47

Heav'd on the surge with intermitting breath,
 And hourly panting in the arms of death.
 The third fair morn now blaz'd upon the main;
 Then glassy smooth lay all the liquid plain, 501
 The winds were hush'd, the billows scarcely curl'd,
 And a dead silence still'd the wat'ry world.
 When lifted on a ridgy wave, he spies
 The land at distance, and with sharpen'd eyes. 505
 As pious children joy with vast delight
 When a lov'd Sire revives before their fight,

ral strength of *Ulysses*; but the Poet has softened the narration, by ascribing his preservation to the cincture of *Leucothea*. The Poet likewise very judiciously removes *Neptune*, that *Ulysses* may not appear to be preserved against the Power of that God; and to reconcile it intirely to credibility, he introduces *Pallas*, who calms the winds and composes the waves, to make way for his preservation.

vs. 506. *As pious children joy with vast delight.*] This is a very beautiful comparison, and well adapted to the occasion. We mistake the intention of it, as *Eustathius* observes, if we imagine that *Homer* intended to compare the person of *Ulysses* to these children: it is introduced solely to express the joy which he conceives at the sight of land: if we look upon it in any other view, the resemblance is lost; for the children suffer not themselves, but *Ulysses* is in the utmost distress. These images drawn from common life are particularly affecting; they have relation to every man, as every man may possibly be in such circumstances: other images may be more noble, and yet less pleasing: they may raise our admiration, but these engage our affections.



48 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK v.

{Who ling'ring long has call'd on death in vain,
 Fixt by some Dæmon to the bed of pain,
 'Till heav'n by miracle his life restore) 510
 So joys *Ulysses* at the appearing shore;
 And fees (and labours onward as he fees)
 The rising forests, and the tufted trees.
 And now, as near approaching as the sound
 Of human voice the list'ning ear may wound, 515
 Amidst the rocks he hears a hollow roar
 Of murm'ring surges breaking on the shore :

✱. 509. *Fixt by some Dæmon to the bed of pain.*] It was a prevailing opinion among the Ancients, that the Gods were the authors of all diseases incident to mankind. *Hippocrates* himself confesses that he had found some distempers, in which the hand of the Gods was manifest, *Σεῖον τὶ*, as *Dacier* observes. In this place this assertion has a peculiar beauty, it shews that the malady was not contracted by any vice of the father, but inflicted by an evil Dæmon. Nothing is more evident, than that every person was supposed by the Ancients to have a good and a bad Dæmon attending him; what the *Greeks* called a Dæmon, the *Romans* named a *Genius*. I confess that this is no where directly affirmed in *Homer*, but as *Plutarch* observes, it is plainly intimated. In the second book of the *Iliad* the word is used both in a good and bad sense; when *Ulysses* addresses himself to the Generals of the army, he says *Δαίμονις*, in the better sense; and immediately after he uses it to denote a coward,

Δαίμονι' ἀτρέμας ἦτο.

This is a strong evidence, that the notion of a good and bad Dæmon was believed in the days of *Homer*



Nor peaceful port was there, nor winding bay,
To shield the vessel from the rolling sea,
But cliffs, and thaggy shores, a dreadful sight ! 520
All-rough with rocks, with foamy billows white.
Fear seiz'd his slacken'd limbs and beating heart ;
As thus he commun'd with his soul apart.

Ah me ! when o'er a length of waters tost,
These eyes at last behold th' unhop'd for coast, 525
No port receives me from the angry main,
But the loud deeps demand me back again.
Above sharp rocks forbid access ; around
Roar the wild waves ; beneath, is sea profound !

ψ. 524. *Ah me ! when o'er a length of waters tost.*] *Ulysses* in this place calls as it were a council in his own breast ; considers his danger, and how to free himself from it. But it may be asked if it be probable that he should have leisure for such a consultation, in the time of such imminent danger ? The answer is, that nothing could be more happily imagined, to exalt his character : he is drawn with a great presence of mind, in the most desperate circumstances : fear does not prevail over his reason : his wisdom dictates the means of his preservation ; and his bravery of spirit supports him in the accomplishment of it.

The Poet is also very judicious in the management of the speech : it is concise, and therefore proper to the occasion, there being no leisure for prolixity ; every Image is drawn from the situation of the place, and his present condition ; he follows Nature, and Nature is the foundation of true Poetry.



50 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK V.

No footing sure affords the faithless sand, 530
To stem too rapid, and too deep to stand.
If here I enter, my efforts are vain,
Dash'd on the cliffs, or heav'd into the main ;
Or round the Island if my course I bend,
Where the ports open, or the shores descend, 535
Back to the seas the rolling surge may sweep,
And bury all my hopes beneath the deep.
Or some enormous whale the God may send,
(For many such on *Amphitrite* attend)
Too well the turns of mortal chance I know, 540
And hate relentless of my heav'nly foe.

While thus he thought, a monst'rous wave
up-bore
The Chief, and dash'd him on the craggy shore :
Torn was his skin, nor had the ribs been whole,
But instant *Pallas* enter'd in his soul. 545
Close to the cliff with both his hands he clung,
And stuck adherent, and suspended hung ;
'Till the huge surge roll'd off : then, backward
sweep
The reflux tides, and plunge him in the deep.



BOOK v. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 51

As when the *Polypus*, from forth his cave 550
Torn with full force, reluctant beats the wave;
His ragged claws are stuck with stones and sands:
So the rough rock had shagg'd *Ulysses'* hands.

ŷ. 550. *As when the Polypus.*] It is very surprising to see the prodigious variety with which *Homer* enlivens his Poetry: he rises or falls as his subjects leads him, and finds allusions proper to represent an Hero in battle, or a person in calamity. We have here an instance of it; he compares *Ulysses* to a *Polypus*; the similitude is suited to the element, and to the condition of the person. It is observable, that this is the only full description of a person shipwrecked in all his Poems: he therefore gives a loose to his imagination, and enlarges upon it very copiously. There appears a surprising fertility of invention through the whole of it: in what a variety of attitudes is *Ulysses* drawn, during the storm, and at his escape from it? His soliloquies in the turns of his condition, while he is sometimes almost out of danger, and then again involved in new difficulties, engage our hopes and fears. He ennobles the whole by his machinery, and *Neptune*, *Pallas* and *Leucothea* interest themselves in his safety or destruction. He has likewise chosen the most proper occasion for a copious description; there is leisure for it. The proposition of the Poem requires him to describe a man of sufferings in the person of *Ulysses*: he therefore no sooner introduces him, but he throws him into the utmost calamities, and describes them largely, to shew at once the greatness of his distress, and his wisdom and patience under it. In what are the sufferings of *Æneas* in *Virgil* comparable to these of *Ulysses*? *Æneas* suffers little personally in comparison of *Ulysses*, his incidents have less variety, and consequently less beauty. *Homer* draws his Images from Nature, but embellishes those Images with the utmost Art, and fruitfulness of invention



52 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK V.

And now had perish'd, whelm'd beneath the main,
 Th' unhappy man ; ev'n Fate had been in vain :
 But all-subduing *Pallas* lent her pow'r, 556
 And prudence fav'd him in the needful hour.
 Beyond the beating surge his course he bore,
 (A wider circle, but in sight of shore)
 With longing eyes, observing, to survey 560
 Some smooth ascent, or safe-sequester'd bay.
 Between the parting rocks at length he spy'd
 A falling stream with gentler waters glide ;
 Where to the seas the shelving shore declin'd,
 And form'd a bay, impervious to the wind. 565
 To this calm port the glad *Ulysses* prest,
 And hail'd the river, and its God addrest.

Whoe'er thou art, before whose stream unknown
 I bend, a suppliant at thy wat'ry throne,
 Hear, azure King ! nor let me fly in vain 570
 To thee from *Neptune* and the raging main.
 Heav'n hears and pities hapless men like me,
 For sacred ev'n to Gods is Misery :

*. 573. *For sacred ev'n to Gods is Misery.*] This expression is bold, yet reconcileable to truth : Heaven in reality has regard to the misery and affliction of good



BOOK V. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 53

Let then thy waters give the weary rest,
And save a suppliant, and a man distressed. 575

He pray'd, and straight the gentle stream subsides,
Detains the rushing current of his tides,
Before the wand'rer smooths the wat'ry way,
And soft receives him from the rolling sea.
That moment, fainting as he touch'd the shore, 580
He dropt his sinewy arms : his knees no more

men, and at last delivers them from it. *Res est sacra miser*, as *Dacier* observes; and *Seneca*, in his *Dissertation on Providence*, speaks to this purpose, *Ecce spectaculum dignum ad quod respiciat, intentus operi suo, Deus ! Ecce par Deo dignum, vir fortis cum malâ fortunâ compositus !* Misery is not always a punishment, but sometimes a trial : this is agreeable to true Theology.

†. 578. *Before the wand'rer smooths the wat'ry way.*] Such passages as these are bold yet beautiful. Poetry animates every thing, and turns Rivers into Gods. But what occasion is there for the intervention of this River-God to smooth the waters, when *Pallas* had already composed both the seas and the storms? The words in the original solve the objection, *πρόσθε δὲ οἱ ποίησε γαλήνην*; or *smoothed the way before him*, that is, his own current : the actions therefore are different; *Pallas* gives a general calmness to the Sea, the River-God to his own current.

†. 581. *He dropt his sinewy arms : his knees no more
Perform'd their office.*]

Eustathius appears to me to give this passage a very forced interpretation; he imagines that the Poet, by saying that *Ulysses* bent his knees and arms, spoke philosophically, and intended to express that he contracted his limbs, that



54 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK V.

Perform'd their office, or his weight upheld :
 His swol'n heart heav'd ; his bloated body swell'd :
 From mouth and nose the briny torrent ran ;
 And lost in lassitude lay all the man, 585
 Depriv'd of voice, of motion, and of breath ;
 The soul scarce waking, in the arms of death.
 Soon as warm life its wonted office found,
 The mindful chief *Leucothea's* scarf unbound ;
 Observant of her word, he turn'd aside 590
 His head, and cast it on the rolling tide,
 Behind him far, upon the purple waves
 The waters waft it, and the nymph receives.

Now parting from the stream, *Ulysses* found }
 A mossy bank with pliant rushes crown'd ; 595 }
 The bank he press'd, and gently kiss'd the }
 ground ; }

had been fatigued with the long extension in swimming, by a voluntary remission ; lest they should grow stiff, and lose their natural faculty. But this is an impossibility : how could this be done, when he is speechless, fainting, without pulse and respiration ? Undoubtedly *Homer*, as *Dacier* observes, means by the expression of ἔκαμψε γένατα καὶ χεῖρας, no more than that his limbs failed him, or he fainted. If the Action was voluntary, it implies that he intended to refresh them, for γόνι κάμπτειν is generally used in that sense by *Homer* ; if involuntary, it signifies he fainted.



Where on the flow'ry herb as soft he lay,
Thus to his soul the Sage began to say.

What will ye next ordain, ye Pow'rs on
high !

And yet, ah yet, what fates are we to try ? 600
Here by the stream, if I the night out-wear, }
Thus spent already, how shall nature bear }
The dews descending, and nocturnal air ; }
Or chilly vapours, breathing from the flood
When Morning rises ? — If I take the wood, 605
And in thick shelter of innum'rous boughs
Enjoy the comfort gentle sleep allows ;
Tho' fenc'd from cold, and tho' my toil be past,
What savage beasts may wander in the waste ?
Perhaps I yet may fall a bloody prey 610
To prowling bears, or lions in the way.

Thus long debating in himself he stood :
At length he took the passage to the Wood,
Whose shady horrors on a rising brow 614
Wav'd high, and frown'd upon the stream below.
There grew two Olives, closest of the grove,
With roots intwin'd, and branches interwove ;



56 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK v.

Alike their leaves, but not alike they smil'd
 With sister-fruits ; one fertile, one was wild.
 Nor here the sun's meridian rays had pow'r, 620
 Nor wind sharp piercing, nor the rushing show'r ;
 The verdant arch so close its texture kept :
 Beneath this covert, great *Ulysses* crept.
 Of gather'd leaves an ample bed he made, 624
 (Thick strown by tempest thro' the bow'ry shade)
 Where three at least might winter's cold defy,
 Tho' *Boreas* rag'd along th' inclement sky.
 This store, with joy the patient Hero found,
 And sunk amidst 'em, heap'd the leaves around.
 As some poor peasant, fated to reside 630
 Remote from neighbours in a forest wide,

ψ. 630. *As some poor peasant, fated to reside
 Remote from neighbours.]*

Homer is very happy in giving dignity to low Images. What can be more unpromising than this comparison, and what more successfully executed ? *Ulysses*, in whom remains as it were but a spark of life, the vital heat being extinguished by the shipwreck, is very justly compared to a brand, that retains only some small remains of fire ; the leaves that cover *Ulysses*, are represented by the embers, and the preservation of the fire all night, paints the revival of his spirits by the repose of the night ; the expression,

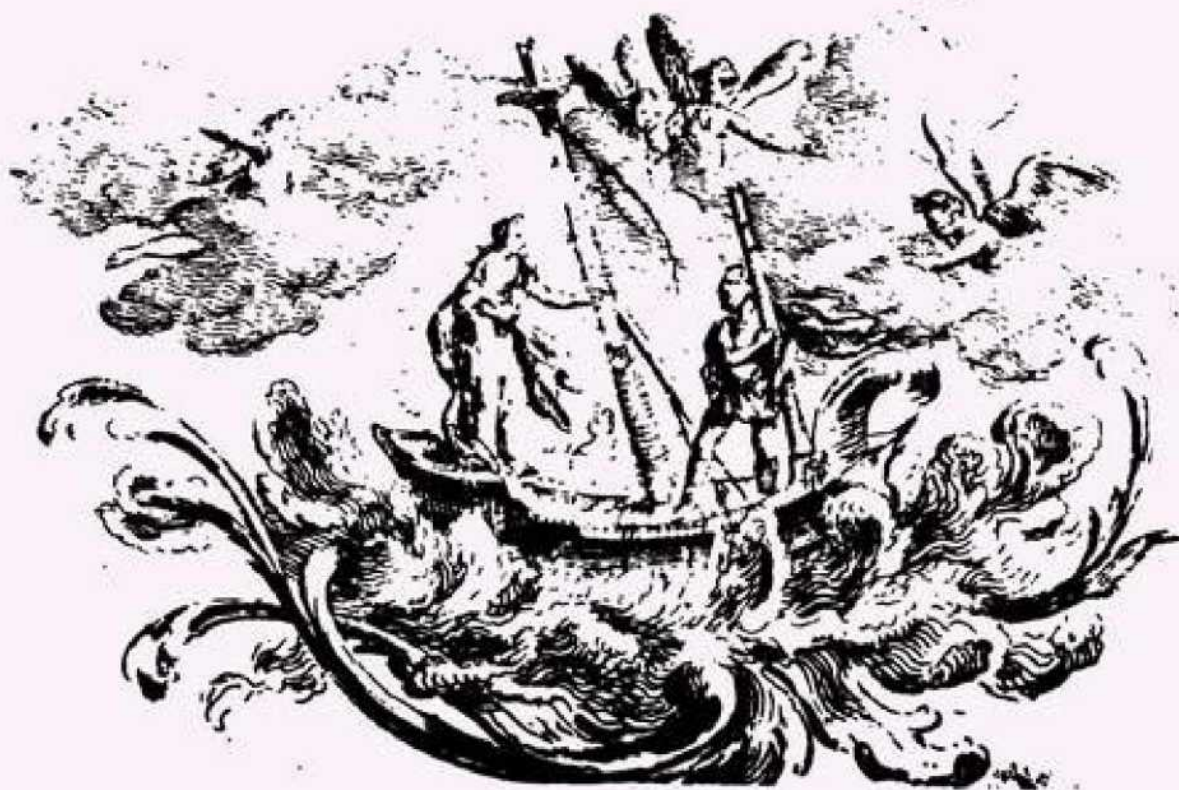
— — — Fated to reside
 Remote from neighbours,



Studious to save what human wants require,
In embers heap'd, preserves the seeds of fire :
Hid in dry foliage thus *Ulysses* lies,
Till *Pallas* pour'd soft slumbers on his eyes ; 635
And golden dreams (the gift of sweet repose)
Lull'd all his cares, and banish'd all his woes.

is not added in vain ; it gives, as *Eustathius* further observes, an air of credibility to the allusion, as if it had really been drawn from some particular observation ; a person that lives in a desert being obliged to such circumstantial cares, where it is impossible to have a supply, for want of neighbours. *Homer* literally calls these remains *the seeds of fire* ; *Æschylus* in his *Prometheus* calls a spark of fire *αυγὸς πυρῆς*, or a fountain of fire ; less happily in my judgment, the ideas of fire and water being contradictory.

The Conclusion.] This book begins with the seventh day, and comprehends the space of twenty-five days ; the first of which is taken up in the message of *Mercury*, and interview between *Calypso* and *Ulysses* ; the four following in the building of the vessel ; eighteen before the storm, and two after it. So that one and thirty days are compleated, since the opening of the Poem.





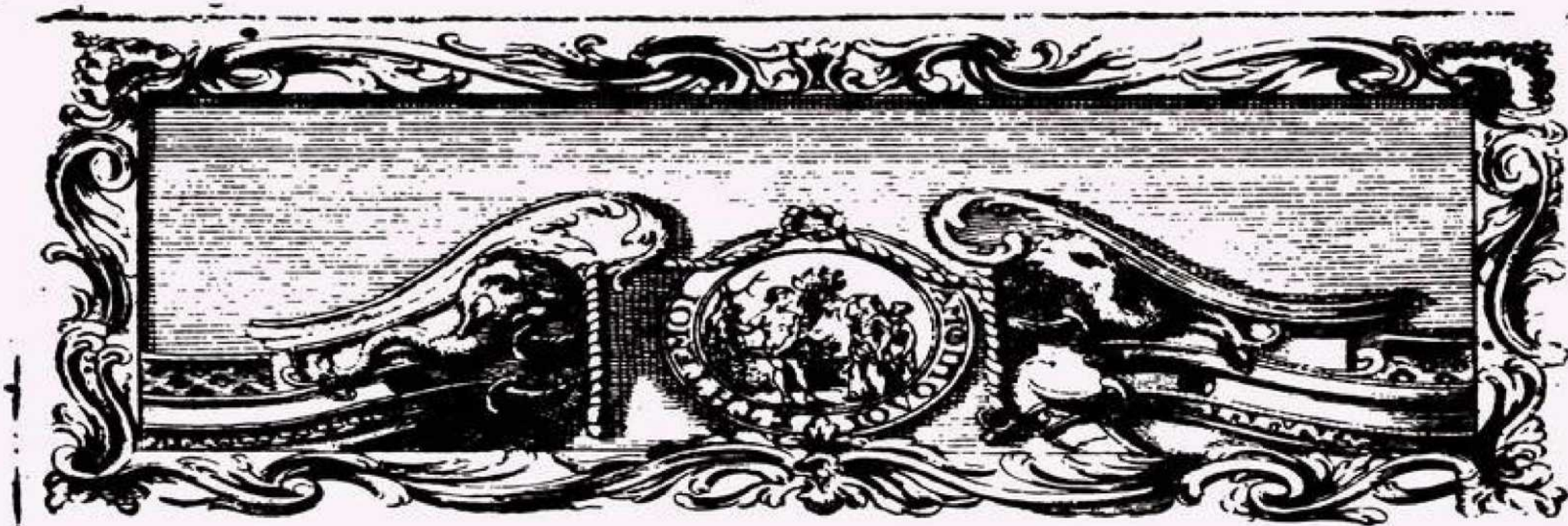
THE
SIXTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.





The A R G U M E N T.

PALLAS appearing in a dream to Nauficaa, (*the daughter of Alcinous King of Phæacia*) commands her to descend to the river, and wash the robes of State, in preparation to her nuptials. Nauficaa goes with her Handmaids to the river; where, while the garments are spread on the bank, they divert themselves in sports. Their Voices awake Ulysses, who addressing himself to the Princess, is by her relieved and clothed, and receives directions in what manner to apply to the King and Queen of the Island.



THE
SIXTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

WHILE thus the weary Wand'rer sunk to
rest,

And peaceful slumbers calm'd his anxious breast;
The Martial Maid from heav'n's aerial height
Swift to *Phæacia* wing'd her rapid flight.

In elder times the soft *Phæacian* train

In ease possess'd the wide *Hyperian* plain;

'Till the *Cyclopean* race in arms arose,

A lawless nation of gigantick foes :



62 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book vi.

Then great *Naufithous* from *Hyperia* far,
Thro' seas retreating from the found of war, 10
The recreant nation to fair *Scheria* led,
Where never science rear'd her laurel'd head :

v. 12. *Where never science rear'd her laurel'd head.*] The *Phæacians* having a great share in the succeeding parts of the *Odyssey*, it may not be improper to enlarge upon their character. *Homer* has here described them very distinctly: he is to make use of the *Phæacians* to convey *Ulysses* to his country, he therefore by this short character, gives the Reader such an Image of them, that he is not surpris'd at their credulity and simplicity, in believing all those fabulous recitals which *Ulysses* makes in the Progress of the Poem. The place likewise in which he describes them is well chosen; it is before they enter upon Action, and by this method we know what to expect from them, and see how every action is naturally suited to their character.

Bossu observes that the Poet has inserted this verse with great judgment: *Ulysses*, says he, knew that the *Phæacians* were simple and credulous; and that they had all the qualities of a lazy people, who admire nothing so much as romantick adventures: he therefore pleases them by recitals suited to their own humour: but even here the Poet is not unmindful of his more understanding Readers; and the truth intended to be taught by way of moral is, that a soft and effeminate life breaks the spirit, and renders it incapable of manly sentiments or actions.

Plutarch seems to understand this verse in a different manner; he quotes it in his *Dissertation upon Banishment*, (to shew that *Naufithous* made his people happy though he left his own country, and settled them far from the commerce of mankind, *εὐαὶς ἀνδρῶν ἀλφεύων,*) without any particular view to the *Phæacians*; which was undoubtedly intended by *Homer*, those words being a kind of a Preface to their general character.



BOOK VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 63

There, round his tribes a strength of wall he rais'd ;
To heav'n the glitt'ring domes and temples blaz'd :
Just to his realms, he parted grounds from
grounds, 15

And shar'd the lands, and gave the lands their
bounds.

Now in the silent grave the Monarch lay,
And wife *Alcinous* held the regal sway.

To his high palace thro' the fields of air
The Goddess shot ; *Ulysses* was her care. 20
There as the night in silence roll'd away,
A heav'n of charms divine *Nausicaa* lay :
Thro' the thick gloom the shining portals blaze ;
Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a
Grace.

This *Phæacia* of the ancients is the Island now called *Corfu*. The Inhabitants of it were a Colony of the *Hyperians* : *Eustathius* remarks, that it has been a question whether *Hyperia* were a City or an Island ; he judges it to be a City : it was infested by the *Cyclops* ; but they had no shipping, as appears from the ninth of the *Odyssey*, and consequently if it had been an Island, they could not have molested the *Phæacians* ; he therefore concludes it to be a City, afterwards called *Camarina* in *Sicily*.

Mr. *Barnes* has here added a verse that is not to be found in any other edition ; and I have rendered it in the translation.

8. 24. *Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a Grace.*]
The Poet, as *Eustathius* observes, celebrates the beauty of



64 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

Light as the viewless air, the Warriour-Maid 25
 Glides thro' the valves, and hovers round her head ;
 A fav'rite virgin's blooming form she took,
 From *Dymas* sprung, and thus the vision spoke :
 Oh indolent ! to waste thy hours away !
 And sleep'st thou careless of the bridal day ? 30
 Thy spousal ornament neglected lies ;
 Arise, prepare the bridal train, arise !

these two attending Virgins to raise their characters, that they may not be esteemed common servants, or the Poet thought extravagant, when he compares *Nausicaa* and her damsels to *Diana* and her nymphs.

The judgment with which he introduces the vision is remarkable : in the *Iliad*, when he is to give an air of importance to his vision, he clothes it in the likeness of *Nestor*, the wisest person of the Army ; a man of less consideration had been unsuitable to the greatness of the occasion, which was to persuade Kings and Heroes. Here the Poet sends a vision to a young Lady, under the resemblance of a young Lady : he adapts the circumstances to the person, and describes the whole with an agreeable propriety. *Eustathius*.

Æ. 31. *The spousal ornament neglected lies ;*

Arise, prepare the bridal train ———]

Here is a remarkable custom of Antiquity. *Eustathius* observes, that it was usual for the bride to give changes of dress to the friends of the bridegroom at the celebration of the marriage, and *Homer* directly affirms it. *Dacier* quotes a passage in *Judges* concerning *Sampson's* giving changes of garments at his marriage feast, as an instance of the like custom amongst the *Israelites* ; but I believe, if there was such a custom at all amongst them, it is not evident from the passage alledged :



A just applause the cares of dress impart,
And give soft transport to a parent's heart.

nothing is plainer, than that *Samson* had not given the garments, if his riddle had not been expounded: nay, instead of giving, he himself had received them, if it had not been interpreted. I am rather of opinion that what is said of *Samson*, has relation to another custom amongst the Ancients, of proposing an *Ænigma* at festivals, and adjudging a reward to him that solved it. These the *Greeks* called γρίφες *Convivales*; *Athenæus* has a long dissertation about this practice in his tenth book, and gives a number of instances of the *Ænigmatical* propositions in use at *Athens*, and of the forfeitures and rewards upon the solution, and non-solution of them; and *Eustathius* in the tenth book of the *Odyssey* comes into the same opinion. So that if it was a custom amongst the *Israelites* as well as *Greeks*, to give garments, (as it appears to be to give other gifts) this passage is no instance of it: it is indeed a proof that the *Hebrews* as well as *Greeks* had a custom of entertaining themselves at their festivals, with these *griphi convivales*: I therefore believe that these changes of garments were no more than rewards or forfeits, according to the success of the interpretation.

ψ. 33. *A just applause the cares of dress impart.*] It is very probable that *Quintilian* had this verse in his view when he wrote *Cultus magnificus addit hominibus, ut Græco versu testatum est, auctoritatem*. His words are almost a translation of it.

Ἐκ γὰρ τοι τέτων φάτις ἀνδρῶνες ἀιαδίνας
Ἔσθλη.

What I would chiefly observe, is, the propriety with which this commendation of dress is introduced; it is put into the mouth of a young Lady (for so *Pallas* appears to be) to whose character it is suitable to delight in Ornament. It likewise agrees very well with the description of the *Phæaciens*, whose chief happiness consisted in dancing, dressing, singing, &c.



66 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

Haste, to the limpid stream direct thy way, 35
 When the gay morn unveils her smiling ray :
 Haste to the stream ! companion of thy care,
 Lo, I thy steps attend, thy labours share.

Such a commendation of ornament would have been improper in the mouth of a Philosopher, but beautiful when spoken by a young Lady to *Nausicaa*.

Æ. 35. *Haste, to the limpid stream.*] This passage has not escaped the raillery of the Criticks ; *Homer*, say they, brings the Goddess of Wisdom down from heaven, only to advise *Nausicaa* to make haste to wash her cloaths against her wedding : what necessity is there for a conduct so extraordinary upon so trivial an occasion ? *Eustathius* sufficiently answers the objection, by observing that the Poet very naturally brings about the safety of *Ulysses* by it ; the action of the washing is the means, the protection of *Ulysses* the end of the descent of that Goddess ; so that she is not introduced lightly, or without contributing to an important action : and it must be allowed, that the means made use of are very natural ; they grow out of the occasion, and at once give the fable a poetical turn, and an air of probability.

It has been further objected, that the Poet gives an unworthy employment to *Nausicaa*, the daughter of a King ; but such Criticks form their idea of ancient from modern greatness : it would be now a meanness to describe a person of Quality thus employed, because custom has made it the work of persons of low condition : it would now be thought dishonourable for a Lady of high station to attend the flocks ; yet we find in the most ancient history extant, that the daughters of *Laban* and *Jethro*, persons of power and distinction, were so employed, without any dishonour to their quality. In short, these passages are to be looked upon as exact pictures of the old World, and consequently as valuable remains of Antiquity.



BOOK VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 67

Virgin awake ! the marriage-hour is nigh,
See ! from their thrones thy kindred monarchs
 fight !

40

The royal car at early dawn obtain,
And order mules obedient to the rein ;
For rough the way, and distant rolls the wave,
Where their fair vests *Phæacian* virgins lave.
In pomp ride forth ; for pomp becomes the Great,
And Majesty derives a grace from State.

46

§. 41. *The royal car obtain.*] It would have been an impropriety to have rendered ἄμαξαν by the word chariot ; *Homer* seems industriously to avoid ἄρμα, but constantly uses ἀπήνη, or ἄμαξα ; this car was drawn by mules ; whereas, observes *Eustathius*, the chariot or ἄρμα was proper only for horses. The word Car takes in the Idea of any other vehicle, as well as of a Chariot.

This passage has undergone a very severe censure, as mean and ridiculous, chiefly from the expressions to her father afterwards, ὑψηλὴν, εὐκυκλον : which being rendered, *high, and round*, disgrace the Author : no person, I believe, would ask a father to lend his high and round Car ; nor has *Homer* said it : *Eustathius* observes, that εὐκυκλον is the same as εὐτροχος, κύκλα λέγουσι οἱ τροχοὶ, or wheels ; and that ὑπερίερα, is τὸ ἐπικείμενον τῇ ῥάγωνι πλανθίων τῷ ἄξονι, or the quadrangular body of the Car that rests upon the axle of it ; this fully answers the Criticism : *Nauficaa* describes the Car so particularly, to distinguish it from a Chariot, which had been improper for her purpose : the other part of the objection, concerning the roundness of the Car, is a mistake in the Critick ; the word having relation to the wheels, and not to the body of it, which, as *Eustathius* observes, was quadrangular.



68 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

Then to the Palaces of heav'n she sails,
Incumbent on the wings of wafting gales :
The seat of Gods ; the regions mild of peace,
Full joy, and calm Eternity of ease. 50
There no rude winds presume to shake the skies,
No rains descend, no snowy vapours rise ;
But on immortal thrones the blest repose :
The firmament with living splendours glows.
Hither the Goddess wing'd th' aerial way, 55
Thro' heav'n's eternal gates that blaz'd with
day.

Now from her rosy car *Aurora* shed
The dawn, and all the orient flam'd with red.

*. 47. *Then to the Palaces of heav'n she sails.*] *Lucretius* has copied this fine passage, and equalled, if not surpassed the original.

“ Apparet Divûm numen, sedesque quietæ,
“ Quas neque concutiunt venti, neque nubila nimbis
“ Aspergunt, neque nix acri concreta pruina
“ Cana cadens violat : semperque innubilus æther
“ Integit, & largè diffuso lumine ridet.”

The picture is the same in both Authors, but the colouring in my opinion is less beautiful in *Homer* than *Lucretius* : the three last lines in particular are fuller of ornament, and the very verses have an air of the serenity they were intended to paint,



BOOK VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 69

Uprose the virgin with the morning light,
Obedient to the vision of the night. 60

The Queen she fought: the Queen her hours
bestow'd

In curious works; the whirling spindle glow'd
With crimson threads, while busy damsels cull
The snowy fleece, or twist the purpled wool.
Meanwhile *Phæacia's* peers in council sat; 65
From his high dome the King descends in
state,

Then with a filial awe the Royal maid
Approach'd him passing, and submissive said;
Will my dread Sire his ear regardful deign,
And may his child the royal car obtain? 70
Say, with thy garments shall I bend my way,
Where thro' the vales the mazy waters stray?

ψ. 61. — — — *the Queen her hours bestow'd*
In curious works ———]

This is another image of ancient life: we see a Queen amidst her attendants at work at the dawn of day: *de nocte surrexit, & digiti ejus apprehenderant fusum*. This is a practice as contrary to the manners of our ages, as the other of washing the robes: it is the more remarkable in this Queen, because she lived amongst an idle effeminate people, that loved nothing but pleasures. *Dacier*.



70 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

A dignity of dress adorns the Great,
 And Kings draw lustre from the robe of State.
 Five sons thou hast ; three wait the bridal day, 75
 And spotless robes become the young and gay :
 So when with praise amid the dance they shine,
 By these my cares adorn'd, that praise is mine.

Thus she : but blushes ill-restrain'd betray
 Her thoughts intentive on the bridal day : 80
 The conscious Sire the dawning blush survey'd,
 And smiling thus bespoke the blooming maid.
 My child, my darling joy, the car receive ;
 That, and whate'er our daughter asks, we give.

Swift at the royal nod th' attending train 85
 The car prepare, the mules incessant rein.
 The blooming virgin with dispatchful cares
 Tunicks, and stoles, and robes imperial bears.

ψ. 88. *Tunicks, and stoles, and robes imperial bears.*] It is not without reason that the Poet describes *Nausicaa* carrying the whole wardrobe of the family to the river : he inserts these circumstances so particularly, that she may be able to clothe *Ulysses* in the sequel of the story : he further observes the modesty and simplicity of those early times, when the whole dress of a King and his family (who reigned over a people that delighted in dress) is without gold : for we see *Nausicaa* carries with her all the habits that were used at the greatest solemnities ; which had they been wrought with gold could not have been waived. *Eustathius.*



The Queen, assiduous, to her train assigns
The sumptuous viands, and the flav'rous wines.
The train prepare a cruise of curious mould, 91
A cruise of fragrance, form'd of burnish'd gold ;
Odour divine ! whose soft refreshing streams
Sleek the smooth skin, and scent the snowy limbs.

Now mounting the gay seat, the filken reins 95
Shine in her hand : along the sounding plains
Swift fly the mules : nor rode the nymph alone ;
Around, a bevy of bright damsels shone.

†. 95. *Now mounting the gay seat, &c.*] This Image of *Nausicaa* riding in her Car to the river, has exercised the pencils of excellent Painters. *Pausanias* in his fifth book, which is the first of the *Eliacks*, speaks of a picture of two Virgins drawn by Mules, of which the one guides the reins, the other has her head covered with a veil : it is believed that it represents *Nausicaa*, the daughter of *Alcinous*, going with one of her virgins to the river. The words of *Pausanias* have caused some doubt with relation to the picture ; he says, ἐπὶ ἡμιόρων, or upon Mules, but *Homer* describes her upon a Car ; how then can *Nausicaa* be intended by the Painter ? But *Romulus Amaſæus*, who comments upon *Pausanias*, solves the difficulty, by observing that ἐπὶ ἡμιόρων does not signify upon Mules, but a Car drawn by Mules, by a figure frequent in all Authors. *Pliny* is also thus to be understood in his thirty-fifth book ; *Protogenes* the *Rhodian* painted at *Athens*, *Paralus*, and likewise *Hemionida*, who is said to represent *Nausicaa* ; *Hemionida* is used (as *Hermolaus Barbarus* observes upon that passage) as a term of art to express a Virgin riding upon, or more properly drawn by Mules, or ἐπὶ ἡμιόρων. *Spondanus*.



72 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

They seek the cisterns where *Phæacian* dames
Wash their fair garments in the limpid streams ;
Where gathering into depth from falling rills, 101
The lucid wave a spacious basin fills.

ψ. 101. *Where gathering into depth from falling rills,
The lucid wave a spacious basin fills.*]

It is evident, that the Antients had basins, or cisterns, continually supplied by the rivers for this business of washing ; they were called, observes *Eustathius*, *πλυντοὶ*, or *βόθροι* ; and were sometimes made of marble, other times of wood. Thus in the *Iliad*, book twenty-two,

Each gushing fount a marble cistern fills,
Whose polish'd bed receives the falling rills,
Where *Trojan* dames, ere yet alarm'd by *Greece*,
Wash'd their fair garments in the days of peace.

The manner of washing was different from what is now in use : they trod them with their feet, *στύβον, ἔτριβον τοῖς ποσὶ. Eustathius.*

It may be thought that these customs are of small importance, and of little concern to the present ages : it is true ; but Time has stamped a value upon them : like ancient medals, their intrinsic worth may be small, but yet they are valuable, because images of Antiquity.

Plutarch in his *Symposiacks* proposes this question, Why *Nausicaa* washes in the river, rather than the sea, though it was more nigh, more hot, and consequently more fit for the purpose than the river ? *Theon* answers from *Aristotle*, that the sea-water has many gross, rough and earthy particles in it, as appears from its saltness, whereas fresh water is more pure and unmixt, and consequently more subtle and penetrating, and fitter for use in washing. *Themistocles* dislikes this reason, and affirms that sea-water being more rough and earthy than that



BOOK VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 73

The mules unharnes'd range beside the main,
Or crop the verdant herbage of the plain.

Then emulous the royal robes they lave, 105
And plunge the vestures in the cleansing wave ;
(The vestures cleans'd o'erspread the shelly sand,
Their snowy lustre whitens all the strand :)
Then with a short repast relieve their toil,
And o'er their limbs diffuse ambrosial oil ; 110
And while the robes imbibe the solar ray,
O'er the green mead the sporting virgins play :
(Their shining veils unbound.) Along the skies
Toft, and retoft, the ball incessant flies.
They sport, they feast ; *Nauficaa* lifts her
voice, 115
And warbling sweet, makes earth and heav'n
rejoice.

of rivers, is therefore the most proper, for its cleansing quality ; this appears from observation, for in washing, ashes, or some such substance are thrown into the fresh water to make it effectual, for those particles open the pores, and conduce to the effect of cleansing. The true reason then is, that there is an unctuous nature in sea-water (and *Aristotle* confesses all salt to be unctuous) which hinders it from cleansing : whereas river-water is pure, less mixt, and consequently more subtle and penetrating, and being free from all oily substance, is preferable and more effectual than sea-water.



74 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

As when o'er *Erymanth Diana* roves,
Or wide *Täygetus* resounding groves ;

†. 117. *As when o'er Erymanth Diana roves.*] This is a very beautiful comparison, (and whenever I say any thing in commendation of *Homer*, I would always be understood to mean the original.) *Virgil* was sensible of it, and inserted it in his Poem.

“ Qualis in *Eurotæ* ripis, aut per juga *Cynthi*,
“ Exercet *Diana* choros ; quam mille secutæ
“ Hinc atque hinc glomerantur *Orcades* : illa pharetram
“ Fert humero, gradiensque deas supereminet omnes :
“ *Latonæ* tacitum pertentat gaudia pectus.”

It has given occasion for various Criticisms, with relation to the beauty of the two Authors. I will lay before the Reader what is said in behalf of *Homer* in *Aulus Gellius*, and the answer by *Scaiger*.

Gellius writes, that it was the opinion of *Valerius Probus*, that no passage has been more unhappily copied by *Virgil*, than this comparison. *Homer* very beautifully compares *Nausicaa*, a Virgin, sporting with her damsels in a solitary place, to *Diana*, a virgin Goddess, taking her diversion in a forest, in hunting with her rural Nymphs. Whereas *Dido*, a widow, is drawn by *Virgil* in the midst of a city, walking gravely with the *Tyrian* Princes, *Instans operi, regnisque futuris* ; a circumstance that bears not the least resemblance to the sports of the Goddess. *Homer* represents *Diana* with her quiver at her shoulder, but at the same time he describes her as an huntress : *Virgil* gives her a quiver, but mentions nothing of her as an huntress, and consequently lays a needless burthen upon her shoulder. *Homer* excellently paints the fulness of joy which *Latona* felt at the sight of her daughter, γένηται δὲ τὴν φέρειν Ἀντήν ; *Virgil* falls infinitely short of it in the word *pertentant*, which signifies a light joy that sinks not deep into the heart. Lastly, *Virgil* has omitted the strongest point and very flower of the comparison,



A filvan train the huntress Queen surrounds,
Her rattling quiver from her shoulder sounds : 120

*Ρεῖα δ' ἀριώτη πέλειαι, καλαὶ δὲ τὲ πῦσαι.

It is the last circumstance that compleats the comparifon, as it diftinguiſhes *Nauſicaa* from her attendants, for which very purpoſe the alluſion was introduced.

Scaliger (who never deſerts *Virgil* in any difficulty) answers, that the perſons, not the places, are intended to be repreſented by both Poets ; otherwiſe *Homer* himſelf is blameable, for *Nauſicaa* is not ſporting on a mountain but a plain, and has neither bow nor quiver like *Diana*. Neither is there any Weight in the objection concerning the gravity of the gait of *Dido* ; for neither is *Nauſicaa* deſcribed in the act of hunting, but dancing : and as for the word *pertentant*, it is a metaphor taken from muſicians and muſical inſtruments : it denotes a ſtrong degree of joy, *per* bears an intensive ſenſe, and takes in the perfection of joy. As to the quiver, it was an enſign of the Goddeſs, as Ἀεὶφερότοξος was of *Apollo*, and is applied to her upon all occaſions indifferently, not only by *Virgil*, but more frequently by *Homer*. Laſtly, εἶα δ' ἀριώτη, &c. is ſuperfluous ; for the joy of *Latona* compleats the whole, and *Homer* has already ſaid γέγηθε δὲ τὲ φρένα Λητώ.

But ſtill it muſt be allowed, that there is a greater correſpondence to the ſubject intended to be illuſtrated, in *Homer* than in *Virgil*. *Diana* ſports, ſo does *Nauſicaa* ; *Diana* is a Virgin, ſo is *Nauſicaa* : *Diana* is amongſt her virgin Nymphs, *Nauſicaa* among her virgin attendants ; whereas, in all theſe points, there is the greateſt diſſimilitude between *Dido* and *Diana* : and no one I believe, but *Scaliger*, can think the verſe above quoted ſuperfluous ; which, indeed, is the beauty and perfection of the comparifon. There may, perhaps, be a more rational objection made againſt this line in both Poets.

“ *Latona* tacitum pertentant gaudia pectus.”



76 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

Fierce in the sport, along the mountain's brow
 They bay the boar, or chase the bounding roe :
 High o'er the lawn, with more majestic pace,
 Above the nymphs she treads with stately grace ;
 Distinguish'd excellence the Goddess proves ; 125
 Exults *Latona*, as the virgin moves.

With equal grace *Nausicaa* trod the plain,
 And shone transcendent o'er the beauteous train.

Meantime (the care and fav'rite of the skies)
 Wrapt in embow'ring shade, *Ulysses* lies, 130
 His woes forgot ! but *Pallas* now addrest
 To break the bands of all-composing rest.
 Forth from her snowy hand *Nausicaa* threw
 The various ball ; the ball erroneous flew, 134

This verse has no relation to the principal subject, the expectation is fully satisfied without it, and it alludes to nothing that either precedes or follows it, and consequently may be judged superfluous.

ψ. 133. *Forth from her snowy hand Nausicaa threw
 The various ball ———*]

This Play with the Ball was called *φεννις*, and *ἐφερίνδα*, by the Ancients ; and from the signification of the word, which is *deception*, we may learn the nature of the Play : the ball was thrown to some one of the players unexpectedly, and he as unexpectedly threw it to some other of the company to catch, from which surprise upon one another it took the name of



BOOK VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 77

And swam the stream: loud shrieks the virgin train,
And the loud shriek redoubles from the main.

Wak'd by the shrilling sound, *Ulysses* rose,
And to the deaf woods wailing, breath'd his woes.

φυνίς. It was a sport much in use among the Ancients, both men and women; it caused a variety of motions in throwing and running, and was therefore a very healthful exercise. The *Lacedæmonians* were remarkable for the use of it; *Alexander* the Great frequently exercised at it; and *Sophocles* wrote a Play, called Πλυνίρις, or *Lotrices*; in which he represented *Nausicaa* sporting with her damsels at this play: it is not now extant.

Dionysidarus gives us a various reading, instead of *Ἐφαίραν* ἔπειτ' ἔρριψε, he writes it, *πάλλαν* ἔπειτ', which the *Latins* render *pillon*, and *Suidas* countenances the alteration, for he writes that a damsel named *Larissa*, as she sported at this play (*πίλω*, not *Ἐφαίρη*) was drowned in the river *Peneus*. *Eustathius*.

What I would further observe is, the art of the Poet in carrying on the story: he proceeds from incident to incident very naturally, and makes the sports of these Virgins contribute to the principal design of the Poem, and promote the re-establishment of *Ulysses*, by discovering him advantageously to the *Phæacians*. He so judiciously interweaves these sports into the texture of the story, that there would be a chasm if they were taken away; and the sports of the Virgins are as much of a piece with the whole, as any of the labours of *Ulysses*.

The Poet reaps a further advantage from this conduct: it beautifies and enlivens the Poem with a pleasant and entertaining scene, and relieves the Reader's mind by taking it off from a continual representation of horror and sufferings in the story of *Ulysses*: he himself seems here to take breath, and indulging his fancy, lets it run out into several beautiful comparisons, to prepare the Reader to hear with a better relish the long detail of the calamities of his Hero, through the sequel of the *Odyssey*.



78 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

Ah me ! on what inhospitable coast,
 On what new region is *Ulysses* tost : 140
 Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms ;
 Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms ?
 What sounds are these that gather from the shores :
 The voice of nymphs that haunt the silvan bow'rs,
 The fair-hair'd *Dryads* of the shady wood ; 145
 Or azure daughters of the silver flood ;
 Or human voice ? but, issuing from the shades,
 Why cease I straight to learn what sound invades ?

†. 139. *Ah me ! on what inhospitable coast.*] This soliloquy is well adapted to the circumstances of *Ulysses* ; and short, as is requisite in all soliloquies.

Virgil has imitated it, and *Scaliger* in general prefers the copy to the original.

“ Ut primum lux alma data est, exire, locosque
 “ Explorare novos, quas vento accesserit oras :
 “ Qui teneant (nam inculta videt) hominesne, feræne,
 “ Quærere constituit” —

But it may perhaps be true, that *Virgil* here falls short of *Homer* : there is not that harmony of numbers, that variety of circumstances and sentiments in the *Latin*, as appears in the *Greek* Poet ; and above all, the whole passage has more force and energy by being put into the mouth of *Ulysses*, than when merely related by *Virgil*.

Dacier observes, that *Abraham* makes the very same reflections as *Ulysses*, upon his arrival at *Gerar*. *Cogitavi mecum dicens, forsitan non est timor domini in loco isto.* Gen. xx. 11. *I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place ;* which very well answers to καὶ σφιν νόος ἐστὶ θεοῦ.



Then, where the grove with leaves umbrageous bends ;

With forceful strength a branch the Hero rends; 150
Around his loins the verdant cincture spreads
A wreathy foliage and concealing shades.

ψ. 151. *Around his loins the verdant cincture spreads
A wreathy foliage and concealing shades.]*

This passage has given great offence to the Criticks. The interview between *Ulysses* and *Nausicaa*, says *Rapin*, outrages all the rules of decency : she forgets her modesty, and betrays her virtue, by giving too long an audience : she yields too much to his complaints, and indulges her curiosity too far at the sight of a person in such circumstances. But perhaps *Rapin* is too severe ; *Homer* has guarded every circumstance with as much caution as if he had been aware of the objection : he covers his loins with a broad foliage, (for *Eustathius* observes, that πλόθος signifies κλάδος πλατύς, or a broad branch) he makes *Ulysses* speak at a proper distance, and introduces *Minerva* to encourage her virgin modesty. Is there here any outrage of decency ? Besides, what takes off this objection of immodesty in *Nausicaa*, is, that the sight of a naked man was not unusual in those ages ; it was customary for Virgins of the highest quality to attend Heroes to the bath, and even to assist in bathing them, without any breach of modesty ; as is evident from the conduct of *Polycaste* in the conclusion of the third book of the *Odyssey*, who bathes and perfumes *Telemachus*. If this be true, the other objections of *Rapin* about her yielding too much to his complaints, &c. are of no weight ; but so many testimonies of her virtuous and compassionate disposition, which induces her to pity and relieve calamity. Yet it may seem that the other damsels had a different opinion of this interview, and that through modesty they ran away, while *Nausicaa* alone talks with *Ulysses*.



80 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

As when a lion in the midnight hours,
Beat by rude blasts and wet with wint'ry show'rs,

ses : but this only shews, not that she had less modesty, but more prudence, than her retinue. The damsels fled not out of modesty, but fear of an enemy : whereas *Nausicaa* wisely reflects that no such person could arrive there, the country being an Island ; and from his appearance, she rightly concluded him to be a man in calamity. This Wisdom is the *Pallas* in the Allegory, which makes her to stay when the other damsels fly for want of equal reflection. *Adam* and *Eve* covered themselves after the same manner as *Ulysses*.

§. 153. *As when a lion in the midnight hours.*] This is a very noble comparison, yet has not escaped censure : it has been objected that it is improper for the occasion, as bearing images of too much terrour, only to fright a few timorous Virgins, and that the Poet is unseasonably sublime. This is only true in Burlesque Poetry, where the most noble images are frequently assembled to disgrace the subject, and to shew a ridiculous disproportion between the allusion and the principal subject ; but the same reason will not hold in Epick poetry, where the Poet raises a low circumstance into dignity by a sublime comparison. The simile is not introduced merely to shew the impression it made upon the Virgins, but paints *Ulysses* himself in very strong colours : *Ulysses* is fatigued with the tempests and waves ; the Lion with winds and storms ; it is hunger that drives the Lion upon his prey ; an equal necessity compels *Ulysses* to go down to the Virgins : the Lion is described in all his terrours, *Ulysses* arms himself as going upon an unknown adventure ; so that the comparison is very noble and very proper. This verse in particular has something horrible in the very run of it.

Σμερδαλέῳ δ' αὐτῇσι φάινη κεκακωμένῳ ἄλμη.

Dionysius Halicarnassus in his observations upon the placing of words quotes it to this purpose : when *Homer*, says he, is to introduce a terrible or unusual Image, he rejects the more



BOOK VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 81

Descends terrifick from the mountain's brow : 155
 With living flames his rolling eye-balls glow ;
 With conscious strength elate, he bends his wa
 Majestically fierce, to seize his prey ;
 (The steer or stag :) or with keen hunger bold
 Springs o'er the fence, and dissipates the fold. 160
 No less a terrour, from the neighb'ring groves
 (Rough from the tossing surge) *Ulysses* moves ;
 Urg'd on by want, and recent from the storms ;
 The brackish ooze his manly grace deforms.
 Wide o'er the shore with many a piercing cry 165
 To rocks, to caves, the frightened virgins fly ;
 All but the Nymph : the nymph stood fix'd
 alone,

By *Pallas* arm'd with boldness not her own.

flowing and harmonious vowels, and makes choice of such
 mutes and consonants as load the syllables, and render the pro-
 nunciation difficult.

Pausanias writes in his *Atticks*, [that the famous Painter
Polygnotus painted this subject in the gallery at *Athens*. "Εγγραψ-
 δὲ καὶ πρὸς τῷ ποταμῷ ταῖς ἐμὲ πλυνύσασαι ἐφιτάμενον Ὀδύσσεια ; he painted
Ulysses approaching *Nausicaa* and her damsels, as they were
 washing at the river. This is the same *Polygnotus* who paint-
 ed in the gallery called ποικίλη, the battle of *Marathon* gained
 by *Miltiades* over the *Medes* and *Persians*.



82 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

Meantime in dubious thought the King awaits,
And self-considering, as he stands, debates ; 170
Distant his mournful story to declare,
Or prostrate at her knee address the pray'r.
But fearful to offend, by wisdom sway'd,
At awful distance he accosts the maid.

If from the skies a Goddess, or if earth 175
(Imperial Virgin) boast thy glorious birth,

ψ. 175. *If from the skies a Goddess, or if earth.
(Imperial Virgin) boast thy glorious birth,
To thee I bend !]*

There never was a more agreeable and insinuating piece of flattery, than this address of *Ulysses* ; and yet nothing mean appears in it, as is usual in almost all flattery. The only part that seems liable to any imputation, is that exaggeration at the beginning, of calling her a Goddess ; yet this is proposed with modesty and doubt, and hypothetically. *Eustathius* assigns two reasons why he resembles her to *Diana*, rather than to any other Deity ; either because he found her and her damsels in a solitary place, such as *Diana* is supposed to frequent with her rural Nymphs ; or perhaps *Ulysses* might have seen some statue or picture of that Goddess, to which *Nausicaa* bore a likeness. *Virgil* (who has imitated this passage) is more bold, when without any doubt or hesitation, before he knew *Venus*, he pronounces the person with whom he talks, *O Dea, certè*.

Ovid has copied this passage in his *Metamorphosis*, book the fourth ;

“ — — — puer ô dignissime credi

“ *Esse Deus ! seu tu Deus es ; potes esse Cupido :*



To thee I bend ! if in that bright disguise
Thou visit earth, a daughter of the skies,

“ Sive es mortalis ; qui te genuere beati,
“ Et frater felix, & quæ dedit ubera nutrix !
“ Sed longe cunctis longeque potentior illa
“ Si qua tibi sponsa est, si quam dignabere tædâ !”

Scaliger prefers *Virgil's* imitation to *Homer* ;

“ O, quam te memorem, virgo ! namque haud tibi vultus
“ Mortalis, nec vox hominem sonat. O Dea, certè !
“ An Phœbi soror, an Nympharum sanguinis una ?”

See his reasons in the fifth book of his *Poeticks*. But *Scaliger* brings a much heavier charge against *Homer*, as having stolen the verses from *Musæus*, and disgraced them by his alterations. The verses are as follow :

Κύπρι φίλη μέλα κύπριν, Ἀθηναίη μετ' Ἀθηήν,
Οὐ γὰρ ἐπιχθονίῃσιν ἴσῃν καλέω Σε γυναιξίν.
Ἀλλὰ Σε θυγατέριςσι Διὸς Κρονιάων εἶσκω,
Ὅλβι' ὅς σ' ἐφύτευσε, καὶ ὀλβίῃ ἦ τέκε μήτηρ,
Γαστήρ, ἣ σ' ἐλόχευσε, μακαρτάτη.

Scaliger imagines this *Musæus* to be the same mentioned by *Virgil* in the *Elysian* fields,

“ Musæum ante omnes,” &c.

But I believe it is now agreed, that all the works of the ancient *Musæus* are perished, and that the person who wrote these verses lived many centuries after *Homer*, and consequently borrowed them from him. *Scaliger* calls them fine and lively in *Musæus*, but abject, unnervate, and unharmonious in *Homer*. But his prejudice against *Homer* is too apt to give a wrong bias to his judgment. Is the similitude of sound in *ἴσῃν* in the second verse of *Musæus*, harmonious ? and is there not a tautology in the two last lines ? *Happy is the mother that bore thee, and most happy the womb that*



84 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

Hail, *Dian*, hail ! the huntress of the groves
 So shines majestick, and so stately moves, 180
 So breathes an air divine ! But if thy race
 Be mortal, and this earth thy native place,
 Blest is the father from whose loins you
 sprung,
 Blest is the mother at whose breast you hung,
 Blest are the brethren who thy blood divide, 185
 To such a miracle of charms ally'd :
 Joyful they see applauding princes gaze,
 When stately in the dance you swim th' harmo-
 nious maze.

brought thee forth ; as if the happy person in the former line were not the same with the most happy in the latter ! Whereas *Homer* still rises in his Images, and ends with a compliment very agreeable to a beautiful Woman.

But blest o'er all, the youth with heav'nly charms,
 Who clasps the bright perfection in his arms !

But this is submitted to the Reader's better judgment.

ψ. 187. *Joyful they see applauding princes gaze.*] In the original there is a false construction, for after *Ἰσίδι θυμὸς ἰαίνειται*, *Ulysses* uses *λευσκόων*, whereas it ought to be *λευσάσι* ; but this disorder is not without its effect, it represents the modest confusion with which he addresses *Nausicaa* ; he is struck with a religious awe at the sight of her, (for so *ἔβας* properly signifies) and consequently naturally falls into a confusion of expression ; this is not a negligence, but a beauty. *Eustathius.*



BOOK VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 85

But blest o'er all, the youth with heav'nly charms,
Who clasps the bright perfection in his arms! 190
Never, I never view'd 'till this blest hour
Such finish'd grace! I gaze and I adore!
Thus seems the Palm with stately honours crown'd
By *Phæbus*' altars; thus o'erlooks the ground;

ψ. 193. *Thus seems the Palm.*] This allusion is introduced to image the stateliness, and exactness of shape in *Nausicaa*, to the mind of the Reader; and so *Tully*, as *Spondanus* observes, understands it. *Cicero*, 1. *de legibus*. *Aut quod Homericus Ulysses Deli se proceram & teneram palmam vidisse dixit, hodie monstrant eandem.* *Pliny* also mentions this Palm, *lib. xiv. cap. 44.* *Necnon palma Deli ab ejusdem Dei ætate conspicitur.* The story of the Palm is this: “When *Latona* was in travail “ of *Apollo* in *Delos*, the earth that instant produced a large “ Palm, against which she rested in her labour.” *Homer* mentions it in his *Hymns*.

Κεχλιμένη —————
Αἰχολάτῳ φοίνικῳ.

And also *Callimachus*.

Λύσατο δὲ ζωνὴν, ἀπὸ δ' ἐκλίθη ἔμπροσθεν ὤμοις;
Φοίνικῳ ποτὶ στέμονον. And again,
— — — ἐπέειπεν ὁ Δήλιος ἀδὺ τὶ φοίνιξ
Ἐξαπίτης.

This allusion is after the Oriental manner. Thus in the *Psalms*, how frequently are persons compared to *Cedars*? And in the same Author, children are resembled to *Olive-branches*.

This Palm was much celebrated by the Ancients, the superstition of the age had given it a religious veneration, and even in the times of *Tully* the natives esteemed it immortal; (for so the abovementioned words imply.) This gives weight



86 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book vi.

The pride of *Delos*. (By the *Delian* coast, 195
I voyag'd, leader of a warrior-host,
But ah how chang'd ! from thence my sorrow
flows ;

O fatal voyage, source of all my woes !)

and beauty to the address of *Ulysses* ; and it could not but be very acceptable to a young Lady, to hear herself compared to the greatest wonder in the Creation.

Dionysius Halicarnassus observes the particular beauty of these two verses.

Δήλαρ δὴ πόλε τοῖον Ἀπόλλωνος παρὰ βωμῶν,
Φοῖνικ' νέον ἔρ' ἀνὰ χόρμενον ἐνόησα.

When *Homer*, says he, would paint an elegance of beauty, or represent any agreeable object, he makes use of the smoothest vowels and most flowing semivowels, as in the lines last recited : he rejects harsh sounds, and a collision of rough words ; but the lines flow along with a smooth harmony of letters and syllables, without any offence to the ear by asperity of sound.

ψ. 198. *O fatal voyage, source of all my woes !*] There is some obscurity in this passage : *Ulysses* speaks in general, and does not specify what voyage he means. It may therefore be asked how is it to be understood ? *Eustathius* answers, that the voyage of the *Greeks* to the *Trojan* expedition is intended by the Poet ; for *Lycophron* writes, that the *Greeks* sailed by *Delos* in their passage to *Troy*.

Homer passes over the voyage in this transient manner without a further explanation : *Ulysses* had no leisure to enlarge upon that story, but reserves it more advantageously for a future discovery before *Alcinous* and the *Phæacian* rulers. By this conduct he avoids a repetition, which must have been tedious to the Reader, who would have found little appetite afterwards, if he had already been satisfied by a full discovery made to *Nausicaa*. The obscurity therefore arises from choice, not want of judgment.



BOOK VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 87

Raptur'd I stood, and as this hour amaz'd,
With rev'rence at the lofty wonder gaz'd : 200
Raptur'd I stand ! for earth ne'er knew to bear
A plant so stately, or a nymph so fair.
Aw'd from access, I lift my suppliant hands ;
For Misery, oh Queen, before thee stands !
Twice ten tempestuous nights I roll'd, resign'd 205
To roaring billows, and the warring wind ;
Heav'n bade the deep to spare ! but heav'n, my foe,
Spares only to inflict some mightier woe !
Inur'd to cares, to death in all its forms ;
Outcast I rove, familiar with the storms ! 210
Once more I view the face of human kind :
Oh let soft pity touch thy gen'rous mind !
Unconscious of what air I breathe, I stand
Naked, defenceless on a foreign land.
Propitious to my wants, a Vest supply 215
To guard the wretched from th' inclement sky :
So may the Gods who heav'n and earth controul,
Crown the chaste wishes of thy virtuous soul,
On thy soft hours their choicest blessings shed ;
Blest with a husband be thy bridal bed ; 220



88 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

Blest be thy husband with a blooming race,
 And lasting union crown your blissful days.
 The Gods, when they supremely bless, bestow
 Firm union on their Favourites below :
 Then envy grieves, with inly-pining Hate ; 225
 The good exult, and heav'n is in our state.

To whom the Nymph : O stranger cease thy care.
 Wise is thy soul, but man is born to bear :
 Jove weighs affairs of earth in dubious scales,
 And the good suffers, while the bad prevails : 230

*. 229. *Jove weighs affairs of earth in dubious scales,
 And the good suffers, while the bad prevails.]*

The morality of this passage is excellent, and very well adapted to the present occasion. *Ulysses* had said,

Heav'n bade the deep to spare ! but heav'n, my foe,
 Spares only to inflict some mightier woe.

Nausicaa makes use of this expression to pay her address to *Ulysses*, and at the same time teaches conformable to truth, that the afflicted are not always the objects of divine hate ; the Gods (adds she) bestow good and evil indifferently, and therefore we must not judge of men from their conditions, for good men are frequently wretched, and bad men happy. Nay sometimes affliction distinguishes a man of goodness, when he bears it with a greatness of spirit. *Sophocles* puts a very beautiful expression into the mouth of *Oedipus*, κάλλος κακῶν, the beauty and ornament of calamities. Eustathius.

Longinus is of opinion, that when great Poets and Writers sink in their vigour, and cannot reach the Pathetick, they descend to the Moral. Hence he judges the *Odyssey* to be the



BOOK VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 89

Bear, with a soul resign'd, the will of *Jove* ;
Who breathes, must mourn : thy woes are from
above.

But since thou tread'st our hospitable shore,
'Tis mine to bid the wretched grieve no more,
To cloath the naked, and thy way to guide — 235
Know, the *Phæacian* tribes this land divide ;
From great *Alcinous*' royal loins I spring,
A happy nation, and an happy King.

Then to her maids — Why, why, ye coward
train,

These fears, this flight ? ye fear, and fly in vain. 240
Dread ye a foe ? dismiss that idle dread,
'Tis death with hostile step these shores to tread :

work of *Homer*'s declining years, and gives that as a reason of its morality : he speaks not this out of derogation to *Homer*, for he compares him to the Sun, which though it has not the same warmth as when in the Meridian, is always of the same bigness : this is no dishonour to the *Odyssey* ; the most useful, if not the most beautiful circumstance is allowed it, I mean instruction : in the *Odyssey* *Homer* appears to be the better Man, in the *Iliad* the better Poet.

*. 242. 'Tis death with hostile step these shores to tread.] This I take to be the meaning of the word *δυσὸς*, which *Eustatbius* explains by ζῶν καὶ ἰσχυμῖνος, *vivus* & *valens* ; or, *be shall not be long lived*. But it may be asked how this character of valour in destroying their enemies can agree with the *Phæacians*, an



90 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

Safe in the love of heav'n, an ocean flows
 Around our realm, a barrier from the foes ;
 'Tis ours this son of sorrow to relieve, 245
 Chear the sad heart, nor let affliction grieve.
 By *Jove* the stranger and the poor are sent,
 And what to those we give, to *Jove* is lent.
 Then food supply, and bathe his fainting limbs
 Where waving shades obscure the mazy streams.

effeminate, unwarlike nation? *Eustathius* answers, that the protection of the Gods is the best defence, and upon this *Nausicaa* relies. But then it is necessary that man should co-operate with the Gods; for it is in vain to rely upon the Gods for safety, if we ourselves make not use of means proper for it: whereas the *Phæacians* were a people wholly given up to luxury and pleasures. The true reason then of *Nausicaa's* praise of the *Phæacians* may perhaps be drawn from that honourable partiality, and innate love which every person feels for his country. She knew no people greater than the *Phæacians*, and having ever lived in full security from enemies, she concludes that it is not in the power of enemies to disturb that security.

ψ: 247. *By Jove the stranger and the poor are sent,
 And what to those we give, to Jove is lent.]*

This is a very remarkable passage, full of such a pious generosity as the wisest teach, and the best practise. I am sensible it may be understood two ways; and in both, it bears an excellent instruction. The words are, *the poor and stranger are from Jove, and a small gift is acceptable to them, or acceptable to Jupiter, Δὲ φίλῃ.* I have chosen the latter, in conformity to the eastern way of thinking: *He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord,* as it is expressed in the *Proverbs*.



BOOK VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 91

Obedient to the call, the Chief they guide 251
 To the calm current of the secret tide ;
 Close by the stream a royal drefs they lay,
 A vest and robe, with rich embroid'ry gay :
 Then unguents in a vase of gold supply, 255
 That breath'd a fragrance thro' the balmy sky.

To them the King. No longer I detain
 Your friendly care : retire, ye virgin train !
 Retire, while from my weary'd limbs I lave
 The foul pollution of the briny wave : 260
 Ye Gods ! since this worn frame refection knew,
 What scenes have I survey'd of dreadful view ?
 But, nymphs, recede ! sage chastity denies
 To raise the blush, or pain the modest eyes.

ψ. 263. *But, nymphs, recede ! &c.*] This place seems contradictory to the practice of Antiquity, and other passages in the *Odyssey* : nothing is more frequent than for Heroes to make use of the ministry of damsels in bathing, as appears from *Polycaste* and *Telemachus*, &c. Whence is it then that *Ulysses* commands the attendants of *Nausicaa* to withdraw while he bathes ? *Spondanus* is of opinion, that the Poet intended to condemn an indecent custom of those ages solemnly by the mouth of so wise a person as *Ulysses* : but there is no other instance in all his works to confirm that conjecture. I am at a loss to give a better reason, unless the difference of the places might make an alteration in the action. It is possible that in baths prepared for publick use, there might be some conve-



92 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

The nymphs withdrawn, at once into the tide
Active he bounds ; the flashing waves divide : 266
O'er all his limbs his hands the wave diffuse,
And from his locks compress the weedy ooze ;
The balmy oil, a fragrant show'r, he sheds ;
Then, drest, in pomp magnificently treads. 270
The warrior Goddess gives his frame to shine
With majesty enlarg'd, and air divine :

nience to defend the person who bathed in some degree from observation, which might be wanting in an open river, so that the action might be more indecent in the one instance than in the other, and consequently occasion these words of *Ulysses* : but this is a conjecture, and submitted as such to the Reader's better judgment.

ŷ. 265. — — — — at once into the tide
Active he bounds ———]

It may be asked why *Ulysses* prefers the river waters in washing, to the waters of the sea, in the *Odyssey* ; whereas in the tenth book of the *Iliad*, after the Death of *Dolon*, *Diomed* and *Ulysses* prefer the sea waters to those of the river ? There is a different reason for this different regimen : in the *Iliad*, *Ulysses* was fatigued, and sweated with the labours of the night, and in such a case the sea waters being more rough are more purifying and corroborating : but here *Ulysses* comes from the seas, and (as *Plutarch* in his *Synopsicks* observes upon this passage) the more subtle and light particles exhale by the heat of the sun, but the rough and the saline stick to the body, till washed away by fresh waters.

ŷ. 271. *The warrior Goddess gives his frame to shine.*]
Poetry delights in the Marvellous, and ennobles the most ordinary subjects by dressing them with poetical ornaments,



BOOK VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 93

Back from his brows a length of hair unfurls,
His hyacinthine locks descend in wavy curls.

As by some artist to whom *Vulcan* gives 275
His skill divine, a breathing statue lives ;

and giving them an adventitious dignity. The foundation of this fiction, of *Ulysses* receiving beauty from *Pallas*, is only this : the shipwreck and sufferings of *Ulysses* had changed his face and features, and his long fasting given him a pale and sorrowful aspect ; but being bathed, perfumed, and dressed in robes, he appears another man, full of life and beauty. This sudden change gave *Homer* the hint to improve it into a miracle ; and he ascribes it to *Minerva*, to give a dignity to his Poetry. He further embellishes the description by a very happy comparison. *Virgil* has imitated it.

“ Os humerosque Deo similis ; namque ipsa decoram

“ *Cæsariem* nato genetrix, lumenque juventæ

“ Purpureum, & lætos oculis afflârat honores.

“ Quale manus addunt ebori decus, aut ubi flavo

“ Argentum *Pariuſve* lapis circumdatur auro.”

Scaliger, in the fifth book of his *Poeticks*, prefers *Virgil* before *Homer* ; and perhaps his opinion is just : *Manus* he says is more elegant than *vir* ; and *addunt ebori decus*, than *χαρίεντα δὲ ἔργα τέλει*. *Os humerosque Deo similis*, carries a nobler idea than *Homer's* *μείζονα καὶ πάσσονα* ; and above all,

“ — — — Lumenque juventæ

“ Purpureum, & lætos oculis afflârat honores,”

is inexpressibly beautiful.

It is said that this image is made by the assistance of *Vulcan* and *Minerva* : why by two Deities ? *Eusebathius* answers, the first rudiments and formation of it in the fire is proper to *Vulcan*, and *Minerva* is the president of arts ; *Minerva* gives the Artificer Wisdom in designing, and *Vulcan* skill in labouring and finishing the work.



94 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

By *Pallas* taught, he frames the wond'rous mould,
And o'er the silver pours the fufil gold.

So *Pallas* his heroick frame improves 279

With heav'nly bloom, and like a God he moves.

A fragrance breathes around : majestick grace

Attends his steps : th' astonish'd virgins gaze.

Soft he reclines along the murm'ring seas,

Inhaling freshness from the fanning breeze.

The wond'ring Nymph his glorious port sur-
vey'd, 285

And to her damsels, with amazement, said,

Not without Care divine the stranger treads
This land of joy : his steps some Godhead leads :
Would *Jove* destroy him, fure he had been driv'n
Far from this realm, the fav'rite Isle of heav'n. 290

Late a sad spectacle of woe, he trod

The desert sands, and now he looks a God.

ψ. 283. *He reclines along the murm'ring seas.*] This little circumstance, *Eustathius* observes, is not without its effect ; the Poet withdraws *Ulysses*, to give *Nausicaa* an opportunity to speak freely in his praise without a breach of modesty : she speaks apart to her damsels, and by this conduct, *Ulysses* neither hears his own commendation, which is a pain to all worthy spirits, nor does *Nausicaa* betray an indecent sensibility, because she speaks only to her own sex and attendants.



Oh heav'n ! in my connubial hour decree
 This man my spouse, or such a spouse as he !
 But haste, the viands and the bowl provide — 295
 The maids the viands, and the bowl supply'd :
 Eager he fed, for keen his hunger rag'd,
 And with the gen'rous vintage thirst asswag'd.

Now on return her care *Nausicaa* bends,
 The robes resumes, the glittering car ascends, 300

ψ. 293. *Oh heav'n ! in my connubial hour decree
 This man my spouse, or such a spouse as he !]*

This passage has been censured as an outrage against Modesty and Credibility ; is it probable that a young Princess should fall in love with a stranger at first sight ? and if she really falls in love, is it not an indecent passion ? I will lay before the Reader the observations of *Plutarch* upon it. “ If *Nau-*
 “ *sicaa*, upon casting her eyes upon this stranger, and feeling
 “ such a passion for him as *Calypso* felt, talks thus out of wan-
 “ tonness, her conduct is blameable : but if perceiving his
 “ wisdom by his prudent address, she wishes for such an hus-
 “ band, rather than a person of her own country who had no
 “ better qualifications than singing, dancing and dressing,
 “ she is to be commended.” This discovers no weakness, but prudence, and a true judgment. She deserves to be imitated by the fair sex, who ought to prefer a good understanding before a fine coat, and a man of worth before a good dancer.

Besides, it may be offered in vindication of *Nausicaa*, that she had in the morning been assured by a vision from Heaven, that her nuptials were at hand ; this might induce her to believe that *Ulysses* was the person intended by the vision for her husband ; and his good sense and prudent behaviour, as *Dacier* observes, might make her wish it, without any imputation of immodesty.



96 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

Far blooming o'er the field : and as she press'd
The splendid feat, the list'ning chief address'd.

Stranger arise ! the sun rolls down the day,
Lo, to the Palace I direct thy way :
Where in high state the nobles of the land 305
Attend my royal Sire, a radiant band.
But hear, tho' wisdom in thy soul presides,
Speaks from thy tongue, and ev'ry action guides ;
Advance at distance, while I pass the plain 309
Where o'er the furrows waves the golden grain :
Alone I re-ascend — With airy mounds
A strength of wall the guarded city bounds :
The jutting land two ample bays divides ;
Full thro' the narrow mouths descend the tides :
The spacious basons arching rocks enclose, 315
A sure defence from ev'ry storm that blows.

ψ. 313. *The jutting land two ample bays divides ;
Full thro' the narrow mouths descend the tides.]*

This passage is not without its difficulty : but the Scholiast upon *Dionysius Periegetes* gives us a full explication of it. Δυὸ λιμένας ἔχει ἡ Φαιακίς, τὸν μὲν Ἀλκιέον, τὸν δὲ Ἰλλύον, διὸ φησὶ Καλλίμαχος ἀμφιδύμος Φαίαξ. The Island of *Phæacia* has two ports, the one called the port of *Alcinous*, the other of *Iyllus* ; thus *Callimachus* calls it the place of two ports. And *Apollonius* for the same reason calls it ἀμφιλαφής, or the place which is entered by two ports. *Dacier*.



Close to the bay great *Neptune's* fane adjoins ;
And near, a Forum flank'd with marble shines,
Where the bold youth, the num'rous fleets to store,
Shape the broad sail, or smooth the taper oar : 320
For not the bow they bend, nor boast the skill
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill ;
But the tall mast above the vessel rear,
Or teach the flutt'ring sail to float in air.
They rush into the deep with eager joy, 325
Climb the steep surge, and thro' the tempest fly ;

ψ. 325. *They rush into the deep with eager joy.*] It is very judicious in the Poet to let us thus fully into the character of the *Phæacians*, before he comes to shew what relation they have to the story of the *Odyssey* : he describes *Alcinous* and the people of better rank, as persons of great hospitality and humanity ; this gives an air of probability to the free and benevolent reception which *Ulysses* found : he describes the vulgar as excellent navigators ; and he does this not only because they are Islanders, but, as *Eustathius* observes, to prepare the way for the return of *Ulysses*, who was to be restored by their conduct to his country, even against the inclination of *Neptune*, the God of the Ocean. But it may be asked, is not *Homer* inconsistent with himself, when he paints the *Phæacians* as men of the utmost humanity, and immediately after calls them a proud unpolished race, and given up to censoriousness ? It is easy to reconcile the seeming contradiction, by applying the character of humanity to the higher rank of the nation, and the other to the vulgar and the mariners. I believe the same character holds good to this day amongst any people who are much addicted to sea-affairs ; they contract a



98 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VI.

A proud, unpolish'd race — To me belongs
The care to shun the blast of slanderous tongues ;
Left malice, prone the virtuous to defame,
Thus with vile censure taint my spotless name. 330

“ What stranger this, whom thus *Nausicaa*
“ leads ?

“ Heav'ns ! with what graceful majesty he treads ?

“ Perhaps a native of some distant shore,

“ The future Consort of her bridal hour ;

roughness, by being secluded from the more general converse of mankind, and consequently are strangers to that affability, which is the effect of a more enlarged conversation. But what is it that inclines the *Phæacians* to be censorious ? It is to be remembered, that they are every where described as a people abandoned to idleness ; to idleness therefore that part of their character is to be imputed. When the thoughts are not employed upon *things*, it is usual to turn them upon *persons* : a good man has not the inclination, an industrious man not the leisure, to be censorious ; so that censure is the property of idleness. This I take to be the moral, intended to be drawn from the character of the *Phæacians*.

ψ. 331. *What stranger this, whom thus Nausicaa leads ?*] This is an instance of the great art of *Homer*, in saying every thing properly. *Nausicaa* had conceived a great esteem for *Ulysses*, and she had an inclination to let him know it ; but modesty forbid her to reveal it openly : how then shall *Ulysses* know the value she has for his person, consistently with the modesty of *Nausicaa* ? *Homer* with great address puts her compliments into the mouth of the *Phæacians*, and by this method she speaks her own sentiments, as the sentiments of the *Phæacians* : *Nausicaa*, as it were, is withdrawn, and a whole nation introduced for a more general praise of *Ulysses*.



“ Or rather some descendant of the skies ; 335
 “ Won by her pray’r, th’ aerial bridegroom flies.
 “ Heav’n on that hour its choicest influence shed,
 “ That gave a foreign spouse to crown her bed !
 “ All, all the god-like worthies that adorn
 “ This realm, she flies : *Phæacia* is her scorn.” 340

And just the blame : for female innocence
 Not only flies the guilt, but shuns th’ offence :
 Th’ unguarded virgin, as unchaste, I blame ;
 And the least freedom with the sex is shame,

✧. 335. *Or rather, some descendant of the skies.*] *Eustathius* remarks, that the compliments of *Nausicaa* answer the compliments made to her by *Ulysses* : he resembled her to *Diana*, she him to the Gods. But it may be asked, are not both these extravagancies ? and is it not beyond all credibility that *Nausicaa* should be thought a Goddess, or *Ulysses* a God ? In these ages it would be judged extravagant, but it is to be remembered that in the days of *Homer* every grove, river, fountain, and oak-tree, were thought to have their peculiar Deities ; this makes such relations as these more reconcileable, if not to truth, at least to the opinions of Antiquity, which is sufficient for Poetry.

✧. 344. ——— *the least freedom with the sex is shame,*
‘Till our consenting sires a spouse provide.]

This is an admirable picture of ancient female life among the Orientals ; the Virgins were very retired, and never appeared amongst men but upon extraordinary occasions, and then always in the presence of the father or mother : but when they were married, says *Eustathius*, they had more liberty. Thus



"Till our consenting fires a spouse provide, 345
And publick nuptials justify the bride.

But would'st thou soon review thy native plain?
Attend, and speedy thou shalt pass the main:

Helen converses freely with *Telemachus* and *Pisistratus*, and *Penelope* sometimes with the suitors. *Nausicaa* delivers her judgment sententiously, to give it more weight; what can be more modest than these expressions? And yet they have been greatly traduced by *Monsieur Perrault*, a *French Critick*; he translates the passage so as to imply that "*Nausicaa* disapproves of a Virgin's lying with a man, without the permission of her father, before marriage;" ἀνδράσι μίσισθαι led him into this mistake, which is sometimes used in such a signification, but here it only means *Conversation*: if the word μίσισθαι signified more than keeping company, it would be more ridiculous, as *Boileau* observes upon *Longinus*, than *Perrault* makes it: for it is joined to ἀνδράσι, and then it would infer that *Nausicaa* disapproves of a young woman's lying with several men before she was married, without the licence of her father. The passage, continues *Boileau*, is full of honour and decency: *Nausicaa* has a design to introduce *Ulysses* to her father, she tells him she goes before to prepare the way for his reception, but that she must not be seen to enter the city in his company, for fear of giving offence, which a modest woman ought not to give: a virtuous woman is obliged not only to avoid immodesty, but the appearance of it; and for her part she could not approve of a young woman keeping company with men without the permission of her father or mother, before she was married. Thus the indecency is not in *Homer*, but in the Critick: it is indeed, in *Homer*, an excellent lecture of Modesty and Morality.

ψ. 347. *But would'st thou soon review thy native plain?*] *Eustathius* and *Dacier* are both of opinion, that *Nausicaa* had conceived a passion for *Ulysses*: I think this passage is an evidence that she rather admired and esteemed, than loved him;



BOOK VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 101

Nigh where a grove with verdant poplars crown'd,
 To *Pallas* sacred, shades the holy ground, 350
 We bend our way : a bubbling fount distills
 A lucid lake, and thence descends in rills ;
 Around the grove a mead with lively green
 Falls by degrees, and forms a beauteous scene ;
 Here a rich juice the royal vineyard pours ; 355
 And there the garden yields a waste of flow'rs.
 Hence lies the town, as far as to the ear
 Floats a strong shout along the waves of
 air.

There wait embow'r'd, while I ascend alone
 To great *Alcinous* on his royal throne. 360

Arriv'd, advance impatient of delay,
 And to the lofty palace bend thy way :

for it is contrary to the nature of the passion to give directions for the departure of the person beloved, but rather to invent excuses to prolong his stay. It is true *Nausicaa* had wished in the foregoing parts of this book, that she might have *Ulysses* for her husband, or such an husband as *Ulysses* : but this only shews that she admired his accomplishments, nor could she have added *such a spouse as he*, at all, if her affections had been engaged and fixed upon *Ulysses* only. This likewise takes off the objection of a too great fondness in *Nausicaa* ; for it might have appeared too great a fondness to have fallen in love at the first with an absolute stranger.



The lofty palace overlooks the town,
 From ev'ry dome by pomp superiour known ;
 A child may point the way. With earnest gait 365
 Seek thou the Queen along the rooms of state ;
 Her royal hand a wond'rous work designs,
 Around a circle of bright damsels shines,
 Part twist the threads, and part the wool
 dispose,

While with the purple orb the spindle glows. 370
 High on a throne, amid the *Scherian* pow'rs,
 My royal father shares the genial hours ;
 But to the Queen thy mournful tale disclose ;
 With the prevailing eloquence of woes :
 So shalt thou view with joy thy natal shore, 375
 Tho' mountains rise between, and oceans roar.

She added not, but waving as she wheel'd
 The silver scourge, it glitter'd o'er the field :

ψ. 373. *But to the Queen thy mournful tale disclose.*] This little circumstance, seemingly of small importance, is not without its beauty. It is natural for a daughter to apply to the mother, rather than the father : women are likewise generally of a compassionate nature, and therefore the Poet first interests the Queen in the cause of *Ulysses*. At the same time he gives a pattern of conjugal affection, in the union between *Arete* and *Alcinous*,



BOOK VI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 103

With skill the virgin guides th' embroider'd rein,
 Slow rolls the car before th' attending train. 380
 Now whirling down the heav'ns, the golden day
 Shot thro' the western clouds a dewy ray ;
 The grove they reach, where from the sacred shade
 To *Pallas* thus the pensive Hero pray'd. 384

Daughter of *Jove* ! whose arms in thunder wield
 Th' avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield ;
 Forsook by thee, in vain I fought thy aid
 When booming billows clos'd above my head :
 Attend, unconquer'd maid ! accord my vows,
 Bid the Great hear, and pitying heal my woes. 390

This heard *Minerva*, but forbore to fly
 (By *Neptune* aw'd) apparent from the sky :

*. 391. — — — — but forbore to fly.

(By *Neptune* aw'd) apparent from the sky.]

We see the Ancients held a subordination among the Deities, and though different in inclinations, yet they act in harmony : one God resists not another Deity. This is more fully explained, as *Eustathius* observes, by *Euripides*, in his *Hippolytus* ; where *Diana* says, it is not the custom of the Gods to resist one the other, when they take vengeance even upon the favourites of other Deities. The late tempest that *Neptune* had raised for the destruction of *Ulysses*, was an instance of *Neptune*'s implacable anger : this makes *Minerva* take such measures as to avoid an open opposition, and yet consult the safety of *Ulysses* : she descends, but it is secretly.



104 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VI.

Stern God ! who rag'd with vengeance unrestrain'd,
'Till great *Ulysses* hail'd his native land.

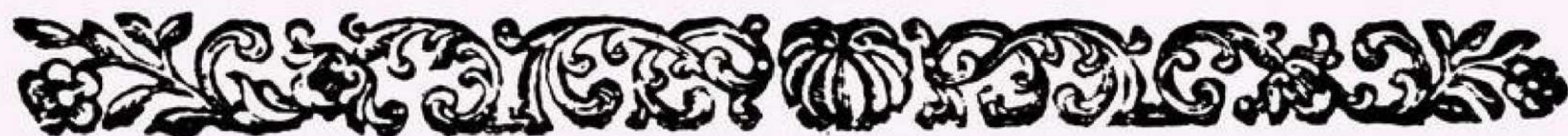
This book takes up part of the night, and the whole thirty-second day ; the vision of *Nausicaa* is related in the preceding night, and *Ulysses* enters the city a little after the Sun sets in the following evening. So that thirty-two days are completed since the opening of the Poem.

This book in general is full of life and variety : it is true, the subject of it is simple and unadorned, but improved by the Poet, and rendered entertaining and noble. The Muse of *Homer* is like his *Minerva*, with respect to *Ulysses*, who from an object of commiseration improves his Majesty, and gives a grace to every feature.





THE
SEVENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.



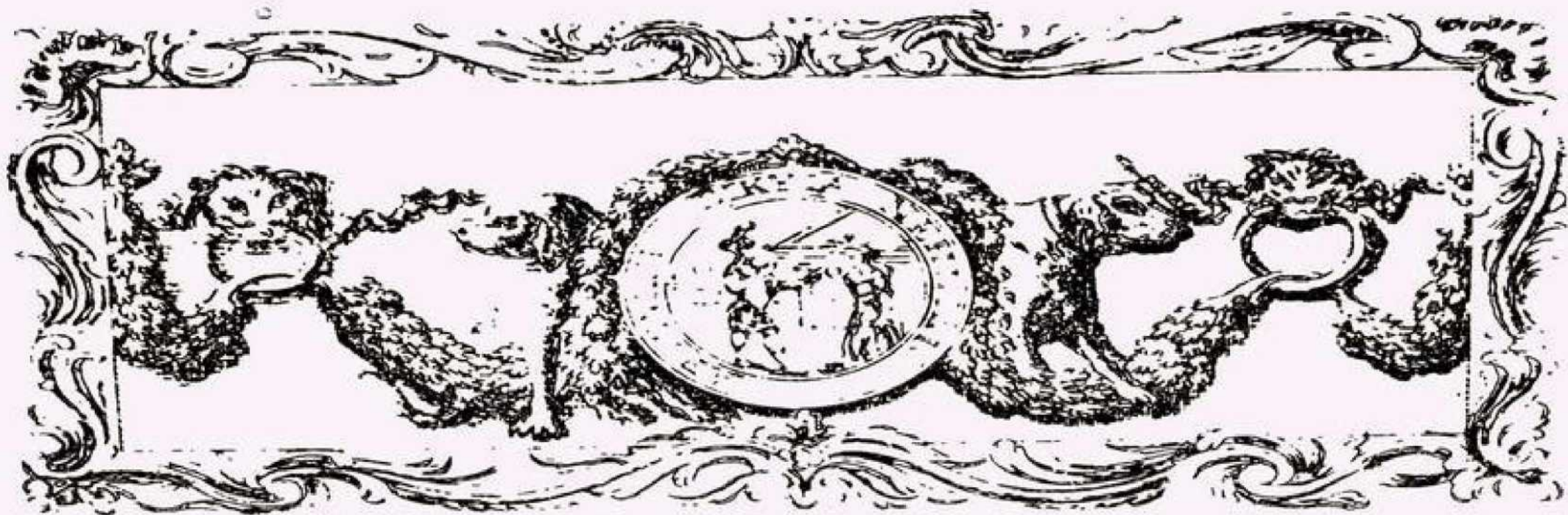


The A R G U M E N T.

The Court of *Alcinous*.

THE Princess *Nausicaa* returns to the city, and *Ulysses* soon after follows thither. He is met by *Pallas* in the form of a young Virgin, who guides him to the Palace, and directs him in what manner to address the Queen *Arete*. She then involves him in a mist, which causes him to pass invisible. The Palace and Gardens of *Alcinous* described. *Ulysses* falling at the feet of the Queen, the mist disperses, the *Phæacians* admire, and receive him with respect. The Queen enquiring by what means he had the garments he then wore, he relates to her and *Alcinous* his departure from *Calypso*, and his arrival on their dominions.

The same day continues, and the book ends with the night.



THE
* SEVENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

THE patient, heav'nly man thus suppliant
pray'd ;

While the slow mules draw on th' imperial maid :
Thro' the proud street she moves, the publick gaze :
The turning wheel before the Palace stays.

* This book opens with the Introduction of *Ulysses* to *Alcinous* ; every step the Poet takes carries on the main design of the Poem, with a progress so natural, that each incident seems really to have happened, and not to be invention. Thus *Nausicaa* accidentally meets *Ulysses*, and introduces him to *Alcinous* her father, who lands him in *Ithaca* : it is possible this might be true history ; the Poet might build upon a real



108 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

With ready love her brothers gath'ring round, 5
Receiv'd the vestures, and the mules unbound.

foundation, and only adorn the truth with the ornaments of Poetry. It is to be wished, that a faithful History of the *Trojan* war, and the voyages of *Ulysses* had been transmitted to posterity ; it would have been the best comment upon the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. We are not to look upon the Poems of *Homer* as mere romances, but as true stories, heightened and beautified by Poetry : thus the *Iliad* is built upon a real dis-sension, that happened in a real war between *Greece* and *Troy* ; and the *Odyssey* upon the real voyages of *Ulysses*, and the disorders that happened through his absence in his own country. Nay, it is not impossible but that many of those incidents that seem most extravagant in *Homer*, might have an appearing truth, and be justified by the opinions, and mistaken credulity of those ages. What is there in all *Homer* more seemingly extravagant, than the story of the race of the *Cyclops*, with one broad eye in their foreheads ? and yet, as Sir *Walter Raleigh* very judiciously conjectures, this may be built upon a seeming truth : they were a people of *Sicily* remarkable for savageness and cruelty, and perhaps might in their wars make use of a head-piece or vizor, which had but one sight in it, and this might give occasion to sailors who coasted those shores to mistake the single sight of the vizor, for a broad eye in the forehead, especially when they before looked upon them as monsters for their barbarity. I doubt not but we lose many beauties in *Homer* for want of a real history, and think him extravagant, when he only complies with the opinions of former ages. I thought it necessary to make this observation, as a general vindication of *Homer* ; especially in this place, immediately before he enters upon the relation of those stories which have been thought most to outrage credibility : if then we look upon the *Odyssey* as all fiction, we consider it unworthily ; it ought to be read as a story founded upon truth, but adorned with the embellishments of Poetry, to convey instruction with pleasure the more effectually.



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 109

She seeks the bridal bow'r : a matron there
The rising fire supplies with busy care,
Whose charms in youth her father's heart in-
flam'd,

Now worn with age, *Eurymedusa* nam'd : 10
The captive dame *Phæacian* rovers bore,
Snatch'd from *Epirus*, her sweet native shore,
(A grateful prize) and in her bloom bestow'd
On good *Alcinous*, honour'd as a God :
Nurse of *Nausicaa* from her infant years, 15
And tender second to a mother's cares.

Now from the sacred thicket where he lay,
To town *Ulysses* took the winding way.

✧. 10. *Eurymedusa nam'd.*] *Eusebius* remarks, that the *Phæacians* were people of great commerce, and that it was customary in those ages to exchange slaves in traffick; or perhaps *Eurymedusa* might be a captive, piracy then being honourable, and such seizures of cattle or slaves frequent. • The passage concerning the brothers of *Nausicaa* has not escaped the Censure of the Criticks : *Homer* in the original calls them *like Gods*, and yet in the same breath gives them the employment of slaves, they unyoke the Mules, and carry into the Palace the burdens they brought. A two-fold answer may be given to this objection, and this conduct might proceed from the general custom of the age, which made such actions reputable; or from the particular love the brothers bore their sister, which might induce them to act thus, as an instance of it.



110 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

Propitious *Pallas*, to secure her care, 20
Around him spread a veil of thicken'd air;

ψ. 20. *Around him spread a veil of thicken'd air.*] It may be asked what occasion there is to make *Ulysses* invisible? *Eustathius* answers, not only to preserve him from insults as he was a stranger, but that he might raise a greater surprise in *Alcinous* by his sudden appearance. But, adds he, the whole is an allegory; and *Ulysses* wisely chusing the evening to enter unobserved, gave occasion to the Poet to bring in the goddesses of wisdom to make him invisible.

Virgil has borrowed this passage from *Homer*, and *Venus* renders *Æneas* invisible in the same manner as *Minerva Ulysses*. *Scaliger* compares the two Authors, and prefers *Virgil* infinitely before *Homer*, in the fifth book of his *Poëticks*.

“ At Venus obscuro gradientes aere sepsit,
“ Et multo nebulæ circum Dea fudit amictu;
“ Cernere ne quis eos, neu quis contingere posset,
“ Molirive moram, aut veniendi poscere causas.”

Scaliger says the verses are more sonorous than *Homer's*, and that it was more necessary to make *Æneas* invisible than *Ulysses*, he being amongst a perfidious nation. But was not the danger as great from the rudeness of the *Phæacians*, as from the perfidiousness of the *Carthaginians*? Besides, *Virgil* does not mention the perfidiousness of the *Carthaginians*; so that it is the reason of *Scaliger*, not *Virgil*: and whether the verses be more sonorous, is submitted to the ear of the Reader. He is chiefly delighted with

“ Et multo nebulæ circum Dea fudit amictu

Qui solus versus, says he, *deterreat Græcos ab ea sententiâ, quâ suum contendunt præferendum*. He allows *Κετομήϊος τ' ἰπείεσσι, &c.* to be a tolerable smooth verse, *Commodus & rasilis*, but yet far inferior to this of *Virgil*;

“ Molirive moram, & veniendi poscere causas.”



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. III

To shun th' encounter of the vulgar croud,
Insulting still, inquisitive and loud.

When near the fam'd *Phæacian* walls he drew,
The beauteous city opening to his view,
His step a Virgin met, and stood before : 25
A polish'd Urn the seeming Virgin bore,
And youthful smil'd ; but in the low disguise
Lay hid the Goddess with the azure eyes.

Show me, fair daughter, (thus the chief de-
mands)

The house of him who rules these happy lands. 30

It is but justice to lay the verses of *Homer* before the reader.

Καὶ τότε Ὀδυσσεὺς ὤρετο πόλιν δ' ἵμεν', ἀμφὶ δ' Ἀθήνη
Πολλὴν ἥερα χεῦε, φίλα φρονέουσ' Ὀδυσῆϊ.
Μήτις Φαιήκων μετ' αὖθις ἀνέβη, ἀνέβη
Κερτομίοις τ' ἐπέεσσιν, καὶ ἐξερίοιθ' ὅτις εἴη.

I determine not which Author has the greater beauty, but undoubtedly *Homer* is more happy in the occasion of the fiction than *Virgil*: *Homer* drew his description from the wisdom of *Ulysses* in entering the town in the evening, he was really invisible to the *Phæacians*, and *Homer* only heightened the truth by Poetry; but *Virgil* is more bold, and has no such circumstance to justify his relation; for *Æneas* went into *Carthage* in the open day.

§, 26. — — *The seeming Virgin, &c.*] It may be asked why *Minerva* does not appear as a Goddess, but in a borrowed form? The Poet has already told us, that she dreaded the wrath of *Neptune*; one Deity could not openly oppose another Deity, and therefore she acts thus invisibly.



112 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

Thro' many woes and wand'rings, lo ! I come
To good *Alcinous*' hospitable dome.

Far from my native coast, I rove alone,
A wretched stranger, and of all unknown !

The Goddeſs answer'd. Father, I obey, 35
And point the wand'ring traveller his way :
Well known to me the palace you inquire,
For faſt beſide it dwells my honour'd fire ;
But ſilent march, nor greet the common train
With queſtion needleſs, or enquiry vain. 40

A race of rugged mariners are theſe ;
Unpoliſh'd men, and boiſtrous as their ſeas :
The native Iſlanders alone their care,
And hateful he that breathes a foreign air.
Theſe did the ruler of the deep ordain 45
To build proud navies, and command the main ;
On canvas wings to cut the wat'ry way ;
No bird ſo light, no thought ſo ſwift as they.

†. 47. *On canvas wings to cut the wat'ry way.*] This circumſtance is not inſerted without a good effect : it could not but greatly encourage *Ulyſſes* to underſtand that he was arrived amongſt a people that excelled in navigation ; this gave him a proſpect of being ſpeedily conveyed to his own country, by the aſſiſtance of a nation ſo expert in maritime affairs. *Euſtathius.*



Thus having spoke, th' unknown celestial leads :
 The footsteps of the Deity he treads, 50
 And secret moves along the crowded space,
 Unseen of all the rude *Phæacian* race.
 (So *Pallas* order'd, *Pallas* to their eyes
 The mist objected, and condens'd the skies.)

✽. 53. — — *Pallas to their eyes the mist condenses.*] *Scaliger* in his *Poeticks* calls this an impertinent repetition, and commends *Virgil* for not imitating it, for *Homer* dwells upon it no less than three times ; and indeed one would almost imagine that *Virgil* was of the same opinion, for he has followed the turn of this whole passage, and omitted this repetition : yet he treads almost step by step in the path of *Homer*, and *Æneas* and *Ulysses* are drawn in the same colours ;

“ Miratur molem *Æneas*, magalia quondam :
 “ Miratur portas, strepitumque & strata viarum.”

Θαύμαζεν δ' Ὀδυσσεὺς λιμένας, καὶ νῆας εἰσας,
 Αὐτῶντ' Ἡρώων ἀγοράς, καὶ τείχεα μακρὰ,
 Ὑψηλὰ, Κολόπειςσιν ἀρηρότα.

Homer poetically inserts the Typography of this city of the *Phæacians* : though they were an unwarlike nation, yet they understand the art of fortification ; their city is surrounded with a strong wall, and that wall guarded with palisades. But whence this caution, since *Homer* tells us in the preceding book, that they were in no danger of an enemy ? it might arise from their very fears, which naturally suggest to cowards, that they cannot be too safe ; this would make them practise the art of Fortification more assiduously than a more brave people, who usually put more confidence in valour than in walls, as was the practice of the *Spartans*.



114 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

The chief with wonder sees th' extended streets, 55
 The spreading harbours, and the riding fleets ;
 He next their princes lofty domes admires,
 In sep'rate Islands crown'd with rising spires ;
 And deep intrenchments, and high walls of stone,
 That gird the city like a marble zone. 60
 At length the kingly palace gates he view'd :
 There stopp'd the Goddess, and her speech re-
 new'd.

My task is done ; the mansion you inquire
 Appears before you : enter, and admire.

ψ. 63. *My task is done, &c.*] As Deities ought not to be introduced without a necessity, so, when introduced, they ought to be employed in acts of importance, and worthy of their divinity : it may be asked if *Homer* observes this rule in this Episode, where a Goddess seems to appear only to direct *Ulysses* to the Palace of *Alcinous*, which, as he himself tells us, a child could have done ? but the chief design of *Minerva* was to advise *Ulysses* in his present exigencies : and (as *Eustathius* remarks) she opens her speech to him with great and noble sentiments. She informs him how to win the favour of *Alcinous*, upon which depends the whole happiness of her Hero ; and by which she brings about his re-establishment in his kingdom, the aim of the whole *Odyssey*. *Virgil* makes use of the same method in his *Æneis*, and *Venus* there executes the same office for her son, as *Minerva* for her favourite, in some degree as a Guide, but chiefly as a Counsellor.



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 115

High-thron'd, and feasting, there thou shalt be-
hold 65

The sceptred Rulers. Fear not, but be bold :
A decent boldness ever meets with friends,
Succeeds, and ev'n a stranger recommends.

First to the Queen prefer a suppliant's claim,
Alcinous' Queen, Al'ete is her name, 70 }
The same her parents, and her pow'r the same. }
For know, from Ocean's God *Nausithous* sprung,
And *Peribæa*, beautiful and young :

(*Eurymedon's* last hope, who rul'd of old
The race of Giants, impious, proud, and bold ; 75
Perish'd the nation in unrighteous war,
Perish'd the Prince, and left this only heir.)

ψ. 74. *Eurymedon, &c.*] This passage is worthy observation, as it discovers to us the time when the race of the antient Giants perished ; this *Eurymedon* was grandfather to *Nausithous*, the father of *Alcinous* ; so that the Giants were extirpated forty or fifty years before the war of *Troy*. This exactly agrees with ancient story, which informs us, that *Hercules* and *Theseus* purged the earth from those monsters. *Plutarch* in his life of *Theseus* tells us, that they were men of great strength, and publick robbers, one of whom was called the *Bender of Pines*. Now *Theseus* stole away *Helen* in her infancy, and consequently these Giants were destroyed some years before the *Trojan* expedition. *Dacier, Plutarch.*



116 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

Who now by *Neptune's* am'rous pow'r comprest,
 Produc'd a Monarch that his people blest,
 Father and Prince of the *Phæacian* name ; So
 From him *Rhexenor* and *Alcinous* came.
 The first by *Phæbas'* burning arrows fir'd,
 New from his nuptials, hapless youth ! expir'd.
 No son surviv'd : *Arete* heir'd his state,
 And her, *Alcinous* chose his royal mate. 85
 With honours yet to womankind unknown,
 This Queen he graces, and divides the throne :

ψ. 84, &c. *Arete.*] It is observable that this *Arete* was both wife and niece to *Alcinous*, an instance that the *Grecians* married with such near relations : the same appears from *Demosthenes* and other *Greek* Orators. But what then is the notion of incest amongst the ancients ? The collateral branch was not thought incestuous, for *Juno* was the wife and sister of *Jupiter*. Brothers likewise married their brother's wives, as *Deiphobus* *Helen*, after the death of *Paris* : the same was practised amongst the *Jews*, and consequently being permitted by *Moses* was not incestuous. So that the only incest was in the ascending, not collateral or descending branch ; as when parents and children married ; thus when *Myrba* lay with her father, and *Lot* with his daughters, this was accounted incest. The reason is very evident, a child cannot pay the duty of a child to a parent, and at the same time of a wife or husband ; nor can a father act with the authority of a father towards a person who is at once his wife and daughter. The relations interfere, and introduce confusion, where the law of nature and reason requires regularity.



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 117

In equal tenderneſs her ſons conſpire,
 And all the children emulate their fire.
 When thro' the ſtreet ſhe gracious deigns to
 move, 90
 (The publick wonder, and the publick love)
 The tongues of all with tranſport ſound her praiſe,
 The eyes of all, as on a Goddeſs, gaze.
 She feels the triumph of a gen'rous breaſt;
 To heal diviſions, to relieve th' oppreſt; 95 }
 In virtue rich; in bleſſing others, bleſt. }
 Go then ſecure, thy humble ſuit prefer,
 And owe thy country and thy friends to her.

ψ. 95. *To heal diviſions, &c.*] This office of *Arete* has been looked upon as ſomewhat extraordinary, that ſhe ſhould decide the quarrels of the ſubjects, a province more proper for *Alcinous*; and therefore the Ancients endeavoured to ſoften it by different readings; and inſtead of οἷσιν τ' εὐφρονέῃσι, they inſerted ἧσιν τ' εὐφρονεόισι, or *ſhe decides amongſt Women*. *Eustathius* in the text reads it in a third way, ἧσιν τ' εὐφροσύνοισι, or *by her Wiſdom*. *Spondanus* believes, that the Queen had a ſhare in the government of the *Phæacians*; but *Eustathius* thinks the Poet intended to ſet the character of *Arete* in a fair point of light, ſhe bearing the chief part in this book, and a great ſhare in the ſequel of the *Odyssey*; by this method he introduces her to the beſt advantage, and makes her a perſon of importance, and worthy to have a place in heroick Poetry: and indeed he has given her a very amiable character.



118 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

With that the Goddeſs deign'd no longer ſtay,
But o'er the world of waters wing'd her way: 100
Forſaking *Scheria's* ever pleaſing ſhore,
The winds to *Marathon* the Virgin bore;
Thence, where proud *Athens* rears her tow'ry head,
With opening ſtreets and ſhining ſtructures ſpread,
She paſt, delighted with the well known ſeats; 105
And to *Ereſtheus'* ſacred dome retreats.

Meanwhile *Ulyſſes* at the Palace waits,
There ſtops, and anxious with his ſoul debates, }
Fix'd in amaze before the royal gates. }

✽, 109. *Fix'd in amaze before the royal gates.*] The Poet here opens a very agreeable ſcene, and deſcribes the beauty of the Palace and Gardens of *Alcinous*. *Diodorus Siculus* adapts this paſſage to the *Island Taprobane*, *Juſtin Martyr* to *Paradiſe*; Τῷ Παραδείσῳ δὲ εἰκόνα τὸν Ἀλκιόου κήπον σώζειν πεποίηκε. He tranſcribes this whole paſſage into his Apology, but with ſome variation from the common Editions, for inſtead of

— — — — — ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἰεὶ
Ζεφυρίη πνεύσα, — — — — he reads,
ἀλλ' αἰεὶ αὖρε Ζεφυρίη, &c. perhaps more elegantly.

Eusebiius obſerves that *Homer* ſuits his Poetry to the things he relates, for in the whole *Iliad* there is not a deſcription of this nature, nor an opportunity to introduce it in a Poem that repreſents nothing but objects of terrour and blood. The Poet himſelf ſeems to go a little out of the way to bring it into the *Odyssey*; for it has no neceſſary connexion with the Poem, nor would it be leſs perfect if it had been



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 119

The front appear'd with radiant splendours gay,
 Bright as the lamp of night, or orb of day, 111
 The walls were massy brass: the cornice high
 Blue metals crown'd, in colours of the sky:
 Rich plates of gold the folding doors incase;
 The pillars silver, on a brazen base; 115
 Silver the lintals deep-projecting o'er,
 And gold, the ringlets that command the door.

omitted; but as *Mercury*, when he surveyed the bower of *Calypso*, 'ravished with the beauty of it, stood a while in a still admiration: so *Homer*, delighted with the scenes he draws, stands still a few moments, and suspends the story of the Poem, to enjoy the beauties of these gardens of *Alcinous*. But even here he shews his judgment, in not letting his fancy run out into a long description: he concludes the whole in the compass of twenty verses, and resumes the thread of his story. *Rapin*, I confess, censures this description of the gardens: he calls it *Puerile* and too light for Eloquence, that it is spun out to too great a length, and is somewhat affected, has no due coherence with, nor bears a just proportion to, the whole, by reason of its being too glittering. 'This is spoken with too great severity: it is necessary to relieve the mind of the reader sometimes with gayer scenes, that it may proceed with a fresh appetite to the succeeding entertainment. In short, if it be a fault, it is a beautiful fault; and *Homer* may be said here, as he was upon another occasion by *St. Augustin*, to be *dulcissime vanus*. The admiration of the gold and silver is no blemish to *Ulysses*: for, as *Eustathius* remarks, it proceeds not out of avarice, but from the beauty of the work, and usefulness and magnificence of the buildings. The whole description, continues he, suits the character of the *Phæacians*, a proud, luxurious people, delighted with shew and ostentation.



Two rows of stately dogs, on either hand,
 In sculptur'd gold and labour'd silver stand.
 These *Vulcan* form'd with art divine, to wait 120
 Immortal guardians at *Alcinous'* gate;
 Alive each animated frame appears,
 And still to live beyond the pow'r of years.
 Fair thrones within from space to space were rais'd,
 Where various carpets with embroidery blaz'd, 125

ψ. 118. *Two rows of stately dogs, &c.*] We have already seen that dogs were kept as a piece of state, from the instance of those that attended *Telemachus*: here *Alcinous* has images of dogs in gold, for the ornament of his palace; *Homer* animates them in his Poetry; but to soften the description, he introduces *Vulcan*, and ascribes the wonder to the power of a God. If we take the poetical dress away, the truth is, that these dogs were formed with such excellent art, that they seemed to be alive, and *Homer* by a liberty allowable to Poetry describes them as really having that life, which they only have in appearance. In the *Iliad* he speaks of living Tripods with greater boldness. *Eustathius* recites another opinion of some of the Ancients, who thought these Κύνες not to be animals, but a kind of large nails (ἧλες) or pins, made use of in buildings, and to this day the name is retained by builders, as Dogs of iron, &c. It is certain the words will bear this interpretation, but the former is more after the spirit of *Homer*, and more noble in Poetry. Besides, if the latter were intended, it would be absurd to ascribe a work of so little importance to a Deity.

ψ. 124. *Fair thrones within, &c.*] The Poet does not say of what materials these thrones were made, whether of gold or silver, to avoid the imputation of being thought fabulous



The work of matrons : these the Princes prest,
 Day following day, a long continu'd feast.
 Refulgent pedestals the walls surround,
 Which boys of gold with flaming torches crown'd ;
 The polish'd Ore, reflecting ev'ry ray, 130
 Blaz'd on the banquets with a double day.

in his description ; it being almost incredible, remarks *Eustathius*, that such quantities of gold and silver could be in the possession of such a King as *Alcinous* ; though, if we consider that his people were greatly given to navigation, the relation may come within the bounds of credibility.

ŷ. 128. *Refulgent pedestals the walls surround,
 Which boys of gold with flaming torches crown'd.]*

This is a remarkable piece of grandeur : lamps, as appears from the eighteenth of the *Odyssey*, were not at this time known to the *Grecians*, but only Torches : these were held by Images in the shape of beautiful youths, and those Images were of gold. *Lucretius* has translated these verses.

“ — — Aurea sunt juvenum simulacra per ædeis,
 “ Lampades igniferas manibus retinentia dextris,
 “ Lumina nocturnis epulis ut suppeditentur.”

It is admirable to observe with what propriety *Homer* adapts his Poetry to the characters of his persons : *Nestor* is wise man ; when he is first seen in the *Odyssey*, it is at sacrifice, and there is not the least appearance of pomp or luxury in his palace or entertainments. The *Phæacians* are of an opposite character, and the Poet describes them consistently with it ; they are all along a proud, idle, effeminate people ; though such a pompous description would have ill suited the wise *Nestor*, it excellently agrees with the vain *Alcinous*.



222 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

Full fifty handmaids form the household train ;
 Some turn the mill, or sift the golden grain ;
 Some ply the loom ; their busy fingers move
 Like poplar-leaves when *Zephyr* fans the grove.
 Not more renown'd the men of *Scheria's* Isle, 136
 For failing arts and all the naval toil,

ψ. 135. *Like poplar-leaves when Zephyr fans the grove.*] There is some obscurity in this short allusion, and some refer it to the work, others to the damsels employed in work: *Eustathius* is of the opinion that it alludes to the damsels, and expresses the quick and continued motion of their hands: I have followed this interpretation, and think that *Homer* intended to illustrate that quick and intermingled motion, by comparing them to the branches of a Poplar agitated by winds, all at once in motion, some bending this, some that way. The other interpretations are more forced, and less intelligible.

ψ. 107. [*Of the original.*]

Καιροσέων δ' ὀθονέων ἀπολείβεται ὑγρὸν ἔλαιον.]

This passage is not without difficulty; some of the ancients understood it to signify the thickness and closeness of the texture, which was so compactly wrought that Oil could not penetrate it; others thought it expressed the smoothness and softness of it, as if Oil seemed to flow from it; or lastly, that it shone with such a glossy colour as looked like Oil. *Dacier* renders the verse according to the opinion first recited.

So close the work, that oil diffus'd in vain,
 Glides off innoxious and without a stain.

Any of these interpretations make the passage intelligible, (though I think the description does better without it.) It is left to the judgment of the Reader which to prefer; they are all to be found in *Eustathius*.



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 123

Than works of female skill their women's pride,
The flying shuttle thro' the threads to guide :

Pallas to these her double gifts imparts, 140
Inventive genius, and industrious arts.

Close to the gates a spacious Garden lies,
From storms defended and inclement skies.

ψ. 138. — — *works of female skill their women's pride.*] We may gather from what *Homer* here relates concerning the skill of these *Phæacian* damsels, that they were famed for these works of curiosity : the *Corcyrians* were much given to traffick, and perhaps they might bring slaves from the *Sidonians*, who instructed them in these manufactures. *Dacier*.

ψ. 142. *Close to the gates a spacious Garden lies.*] This famous Garden of *Alcinous* contains no more than four acres of ground, which in those times of simplicity was thought a large one even for a Prince. It is laid out as *Eustathius* observes, into three parts ; a grove for fruits and shade, a vineyard, and an allotment for olives and herbs. It is watered with two fountains, the one supplies the palace and town, the other the garden and the flowers. But it may be asked what reality there is in the relation, and whether any trees bear fruit all the year in this Island ? *Eustathius* observes, that experience teaches the contrary, and that it is only true of the greatest part of the year ; *Homer*, adds he, disguises the true situation of the *Phæacians*, and here describes it as one of the happy Islands ; at once to enrich his Poetry, and to avoid a discovery of his Poetical exaggeration. The relation is true of other places, if *Pliny* and *Theophrastus* deserve credit, as *Dacier* observes ; thus the Citron bears during the whole year fruits and flowers. *Arbos ipsa omnibus horis pomifera, aliis cadentibus, aliis maturefcentibus, aliis vero subnascentibus.* The same is related of other trees by *Pliny* : *Novusque fructus in his cum Annotino pendet* ; he affirms the like of the Pine,



124 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

Four acres was th' allotted space of ground,
Fenc'd with a green enclosure all around, 145

Habet fructum maturescentem, habet proximo anno ad maturitatem, venturum, ac deinde tertio, &c. So that what *Homer* relates is in itself true, though not entirely of *Phæacia*. Or perhaps it might be only intended for a more beautiful and poetical manner of describing the constant succession of one fruit after another in a fertile climate.

— — — — Figs on figs arise.

Aristotle applied this Hemestick scoffingly to the sycophants of *Athens*: he was about to leave that city upon its rejoicing at the death of *Socrates*: and, quoting this verse, he said he would not live in a place where

— — — — Γηράσκει σῦκον δ' ἐπὶ κύκῳ.

alluding to the derivation of the word Sycophant. *Eustathius*.

Some dry the black'ning clusters in the Sun.

To understand this passage aright, it is necessary to know the manner of ordering the vintage amongst the *Greeks*. First, they carried all the grapes they gathered into a house for a season; afterwards they exposed them ten days to the sun, and let them lie abroad as many nights in the freshness of the air; then they kept them five days in cool shades, and on the sixth they trod them, and put the wine into vessels. This we learn from *Hesiod*: ἔρῳν, ν. 229.

— — — Πάντας ἀπόδρεπε οἶκαδε βότρυς
Δείξαι δ' ἡελίῳ δέκα τ' ἡμέλαι καὶ δέκα νύκτας
Πέντε δὲ Κυσκιάσαι, ἔκλω δ' εἰς ἄλγῃ ἀφύσσαι
Δῶρα Διωνύσῃ πολυθήθῃ. —

Homer distinguishes the whole into three orders: first, the grapes that have already been exposed to the sun are trod; the second order is of the grapes that are exposed, while the others are treading; and the third, of those that are ripe to be gathered, while the others are thus ordering. *Homer*



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 125

Tall thriving trees confess'd the fruitful mould ;
 The red'ning apple ripens here to gold.
 Here the blue fig with luscious juice o'erflows,
 With deeper red the full pomegranate glows,
 The branch here bends beneath the weighty pear,
 And verdant olives flourish round the year. 151
 The balmy spirit of the western gale
 Eternal breathes on fruits untaught to fail :
 Each dropping pear a following pear supplies,
 On apples apples, figs on figs arise : 155
 The same mild season gives the blooms to blow,
 The buds to harden, and the fruits to grow.

Here order'd vines in equal ranks appear,
 With all th' united labours of the year ;
 Some to unload the fertile branches run, 160
 Some dry the black'ning clusters in the sun,
 Others to tread the liquid harvest join,
 The groaning presses foam with floods of wine.

himself thus explains it, by saying, that while some vines were loaded with black and mature grapes, others were green, or but just turning to blackness. *Homer* undoubtedly founds this poetical relation upon observing some vines that bore fruit thrice annually. *Pliny* affirms this to be true, *lib. xvi. cap. 27.* *Vites quidem & triferæ sunt, quas ob id injanas vocant, quoniam in iis aliæ, maturescunt, aliæ turgescunt, aliæ fiorent. Dacier.*



126 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

Here are the vines in early flow'r descry'd,
 Here grapes discolour'd on the sunny side, 165
 And there in autumn's richest purple dy'd. }

Beds of all various herbs, for ever green,
 In beauteous order terminate the scene.

Two plenteous fountains the whole prospect
 crown'd ; 169
 This thro' the gardens leads its streams around,
 Visits each plant, and waters all the ground :
 While that in pipes beneath the palace flows,
 And thence its current on the town bestows ;
 To various use their various streams they bring,
 The people one, and one supplies the King. 175

Such were the glories which the Gods ordain'd,
 To grace *Alcinous*, and his happy land.
 Ev'n from the Chief, who men and nations
 knew,

Th' unwonted scene surprise and rapture drew.
 In pleasing thought he ran the prospect o'er, 180
 Then hasty enter'd at the lofty door.
 Night now approaching, in the palace stand,
 With goblets crown'd, the Rulers of the land ;



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 127

Prepar'd for rest, and off'ring to the * God
 Who bears the virtue of the sleepy rod. 185
 Unseen he glided through the joyous crowd,
 With darkness circled, and an ambient cloud.
 Direct to great *Alcinous'* throne he came,
 And prostrate fell before th' Imperial dame.
 Then from around him drop'd the veil of night ;
 Sudden he shines, and manifest to sight. 191

* *Mercury.*

ψ. 184. *Prepar'd for rest, and off'ring to the God
 Who bears the virtue of the sleepy rod.]*

I have already explained from *Athenæus* this custom of offering to *Mercury* at the conclusion of entertainments : he was thought by the Ancients to preside over sleep : *Dat somnos adimitque*, according to *Horace*, as *Dacier* observes. In following ages this practice was altered, and they offered not to *Mercury*, but to *Jove* the Perfecter, or to Σείς τέλει.

ψ. 190. *Then from around him drop'd the veil of night.]* If this whole story of the veil of air had been told simply and nakedly, it would imply no more than that *Ulysses* arrived without being discovered ; and the breaking of the veil denotes his first coming into sight, in the Presence of the Queen. But *Homer* steps out of the vulgar road of an Historian, and clothes it with a sublimity worthy of heroick Poetry. In the same manner *Virgil* discovers his *Æneas* to *Dido* :

“ — — — Cum circumfusa repente
 “ Scindit se nubes, & in aera purgat apertum.”

Scaliger prefers these verses to those of *Homer*, and perhaps with good reason ; he calls the last part of the second verse a divine addition ; and indeed it is far more beautiful than the Σιρφαῖς ἀνε of *Homer*.



128 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

The Nobles gaze, with awful fear oppress;
Silent they gaze, and eye the god-like guest.

Daughter of great *Rhexenor*! (thus began
Low at her knees, the much-induring man) 195
To thee, thy consort, and this royal train,
To all that share the blessings of your reign,
A suppliant bends: oh pity human woe!
'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe.
A wretched exile to his country send, 200
Long worn with griefs, and long without a friend.

ψ. 196. *To thee, thy consort, and this royal train.*] *Minerva* commanded *Ulysses* to supplicate the Queen: why then does he exceed the directions of the Goddess, and not only address himself to *Alcinous*, but to the rest of the assembly? *Spondanus* answers, that *Ulysses* adapts himself to the present circumstances, and seeing the King and other Peers in the same assembly, he thought it improper not to take notice of them: he therefore addresses himself to all, that he may make all his friends. But then does not *Minerva* give improper directions? and is not *Ulysses* more wise than the Goddess of Wisdom? The true reason therefore may perhaps be, that *Ulysses* really complies with the injunctions of the Goddess: she commands him to address himself to the Queen: and he does so: this I take to mean chiefly or primarily, but not exclusively of the King: if the passage be thus understood, it solves the objection.

ψ. 200. *A wretched exile to his country send.*] *Ulysses* here speaks very concisely: and he may seem to break abruptly into the subject of his petition, without letting the audience either into the knowledge of his condition or person. Was



So may the Gods your better days increase,
And all your joys descend on all your race,
So reign for ever on your country's breast,
Your people blessing, by your people blest! 205

Then to the genial hearth he bow'd his face,
And humbled in the ashes took his place.

this a proper method to prevail over an assembly of strangers? But his gesture spoke for him, he threw himself into the posture of a suppliant, and the persons of all suppliants were esteemed to be sacred: he declared himself to be a man in calamity, and reserves his story to be told more at large, when the surprise of the *Phæacians* at the sudden appearance of a stranger was over; this conciseness therefore is not blameable, but rather an instance of *Homer's* judgment, who knows when to be short, and when to be copious.

†. 207. *And humbled in the ashes took his place.*] This was the custom of Suppliants: they betook themselves to the hearth as sacred, and a place of refuge. It was particularly in the protection of *Vesta*: thus *Tully*, lib. ii. de *Naturâ Deorum*; *Nomen Vestæ sumptum est a Græcis, ea est enim quæ illis ἱεὶα dicitur, jusque ejus ad aras, & focos pertinet.* *Apollonius* likewise, as *Spendanus* observes, takes notice of this custom of Suppliants.

Τὸ δ' ἄνεω, καὶ ἄναυδοι, ἐφ' ἐσλήν αἰέξαντες
Ἰζανον, ἥτε δίκη λυγροῖς ἐκέτησι τέτυκται.

That is, they betook themselves to the hearth, and there sat mute, which is the custom of all unhappy suppliants. If it was a custom, as *Apollonius* observes, to sit mute, this gives another reason why *Ulysses* used but few words in his supplication: he had greatly outraged a practice that was established as sacred amongst the *Greeks*, and had not acted in the character of a Suppliant, if he had lanced out into a long oration.



130 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VII.

Silence ensu'd. The eldest first began,

Echeneus sage, a venerable man !

Whose well-taught mind the present age surpast,

And join'd to that th' experience of the last. 211

Fit words attended on his weighty sense,

And mild persuasion flow'd in eloquence.

Oh fight (he cry'd) dishonest and unjust !

A guest, a stranger, seated in the dust ! 215

To raise the lowly suppliant from the ground

Befits a Monarch. Lo ! the Peers around

But wait thy word, the gentle guest to grace,

And seat him fair in some distinguish'd place.

Let first the herald due libation pay 220

To *Jove*, who guides the wand'rer on his way ;

This was the most sure and effectual way of supplication ; thus when *Themistocles* fled to *Admetus* King of the *Molossians*, he placed himself before the hearth, and was received, though that King had formerly vowed his destruction. *Plutarch* indeed calls it an unusual way of supplication, but that proceeded from his carrying a child in his arms to move the greater compassion, not from his throwing himself into the protection of the Household Gods.

ψ. 209. *Echeneus sage, &c.*] The expression in the original, as *Dacier* observes, is remarkable : *Echeneus an old man, who knew many ancient, and great variety of things ; he was wise by long experience, and by being conversant in ancient story : the Author of the book of Wisdom speaks almost in the same expressions : Scit præterita & de futuris æstimat.*



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 131

Then set the genial banquet in his view,
And give the stranger-guest a stranger's due.

His sage advice the list'ning King obeys, 224
He stretch'd his hand the prudent chief to raise,
And from his seat *Laodamas* remov'd,
(The monarch's offspring, and his best belov'd)
There next his side the god-like hero sat ;
With stars of silver shone the bed of state. 229
The golden ew'r a beauteous handmaid brings,
Replenish'd from the cool tranfluent springs,
Whose polish'd vase with copious streams supplies
A silver laver, of capacious size.
The table next in regal order spread,
The glitt'ring canisters are heap'd with bread : 235
Viands of various kinds invite the taste,
Of choicest sort and favour, rich repast !
Thus feasting high, *Alcinous* gave the sign,
And bade the herald pour the rosy wine.

✱. 226. *And from his seat Laodamas remov'd.*] *Plutarch* in his *Symposiacks* discusses a question, whether the Master of the feast should place his guests, or let them seat themselves promiscuously : he there commends this conduct of *Alcinous*, as an instance of a courteous disposition and great humanity, who gave a place of dignity to a stranger and suppliant.



132 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

Let all around the due libation pay 240

To *Jove*, who guides the wand'rer on his way.

He said. *Pontonus* heard the King's command ;
The circling goblet moves from hand to hand :
Each drinks the juice that glads the heart of
man.

Alcinous then, with aspect mild, began. 245

Princes and Peers, attend ! while we impart
To you, the thoughts of no inhuman heart.
Now pleas'd and satiate from the social rite
Repair we to the blessings of the night :
But with the rising day, assembled here, 250
Let all th' Elders of the land appear,
Pious observe our hospitable laws,
And heav'n propitiate in the stranger's cause :
Then join'd in council, proper means explore
Safe to transport him to the wisht-for shore : 255

℥. 240. — — — the due libation pay
To Jove ———]

We have already seen that the whole assembly was about to pour libations to *Mercury* ; whence is it then that they now offer to *Jupiter* ? *Eustathius* observes, it was because of the arrival of this stranger, and *Jupiter* presides over all strangers, and is frequently stiled Ζεύς ξένων, and Ζεύς ἱερώων.



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 133

(How distant that, imports not us to know,
Nor weigh the labour, but relieve the woe)
Meantime, nor harm nor anguish let him bear:
This interval, Heav'n trusts him to our care ;
But to his native land our charge resign'd, 260
Heav'n's is his life to come, and all the woes behind.
Then must he suffer what the Fates ordain ; }
For Fate has wove the thread of life with pain, }
And twins ev'n from the birth, are misery and }
man ! }

But if descended from th' *Olympian* bow'r, 265
Gracious approach us some immortal pow'r ;
If in that form thou com'st a guest divine :
Some high event the conscious Gods design.
As yet, unbid they never grac'd our feast,
The solemn sacrifice call'd down the guest ; 270
Then manifest of heav'n the vision stood,
And to our eyes familiar was the God.
Oft with some favour'd traveller they stray,
And shine before him all the desert way :
With social intercourse, and face to face, 275
The friends and guardians of our pious race.



So near approach we their celestial kind,
By justice, truth, and probity of mind ;

✱, 277. *So near approach we their celestial kind, &c.*] There is some intricacy in this passage, and much labour has been used to explain it. Some would have it to imply, that “we
“ are as nearly allied to the Gods, as the *Cyclops* and Gi-
“ ants, who are descended from them ; and if the Gods fre-
“ quently appear to these Giants who defy them ; how much
“ more may it be expected by the *Phæacians* to enjoy that
“ favour, who reverence and adore them ?” *Eustathius* explains it after another method ; *Alcinous* had conceived a fixed hatred against the race of the *Cyclops*, who had expelled the *Phæacians* from their country, and forced them to seek a new habitation ; he here expresses that hatred, and says, that the *Phæacians* resemble the Gods as much in Goodness, as the *Cyclops* and Giants one the other in impiety : he illustrates it, by shewing that the expression has the same import as if we should say that *Socrates* comes as near to *Plato* in virtue, as *Anytus* and *Meiuis* to one another in wickedness ; and indeed the construction will be easy, by understanding *Ἀλλήγαις* in the second verse.

— — — Σφίσι ἐγγίθεν εἰμὲν,

ὥσπερ κίχλωπές τε καὶ ὤγρια φῦλα γηγάνων.

Subaudi, ἐγγίθεν ἀλλήγαις εἰσὶν.

I have already spoken of the presence of the Gods at the sacrifices, in a former note upon the *Odyssey* : this frequent intercourse of the Gods was agreeable to the Theology of the Ancients ; but why then is *Alcinous* surprised at the appearance of *Ulysses*, whom he looks upon as a God, if such favours were frequent ? *Spondanus* replies, that it is the un-usualness of the time, not the appearance, that surprises *Alcinous* ; the Gods appeared either at their sacrifices, or in their journeys, and therefore he looks upon this visit as a thing extraordinary.



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 135

As our dire neighbours of *Cyclopæan* birth, 279
Match in fierce wrong, the Giant-sons of earth.

Let no such thought (with modest grace rejoin'd
The prudent *Greek*) possess the royal mind.

Alas ! a mortal, like thyself, am I ;
No glorious native of yon azure sky :
In form, ah how unlike their heav'nly kind ? 285
How more inferior in the gifts of mind ?

Alas, a mortal ! most oppress'd of those
Whom fate has loaded with a weight of woes ;
By a sad train of miseries alone
Distinguish'd long, and second now to none ! 290
By heav'n's high will compell'd from shore to shore ;
With heav'n's high will prepar'd to suffer more.

What histories of toil could I declare ?
But still long-weary'd nature wants repair ;
Spent with fatigue, and shrunk with pining fast,
My craving bowels still require repast. 296

Howe'er the noble, suff'ring mind, may grieve
Its load of anguish, and disdain to live ;

Necessity demands our daily bread ;
Hunger is insolent, and will be fed. 300



136 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

Eut finish, oh ye Peers ! what you propose,
 And let the morrow's dawn conclude my woes.
 Pleas'd will I suffer all the Gods ordain,
 To see my foil, my son, my friends, again.
 That view vouchsaf'd, let instant death surprise
 With ever-during shade these happy eyes ! 306

Th' assembled Peers with gen'ral praise ap-
 prov'd

His pleaded reason, and the suit he mov'd.
 Each drinks a full oblivion of his cares,
 And to the gifts of balmy sleep repairs. 310

†. 305. *That view vouchsaf'd, let instant death, &c.]* It is very necessary to recall frequently to the reader's mind the desire *Ulysses* has to reach his own country ; and to shew that he is absent not by choice, but necessity ; all the disorders in his kingdoms happen by reason of his absence : it is therefore necessary to set the desire of his return in the strongest point of light, that he may not seem accessory to those disorders, by being absent when it was in his power to return. It is observable that *Ulysses* does not here make any mention of *Penelope*, whom he scarce ever omits in other places, as one of the chief inducements to wish for his country ; the reason of his silence, says *Eustathius*, is, because he is unwilling to abate the favour of *Alcinous*, by a discovery that would shew it was impossible for him to marry his daughter ; such a discovery might make the King proceed more coolly towards his transportation ; whereas it would afterwards be less dangerous, when he has had an opportunity fully to engage him in his favour.



Ulysses in the regal walls alone
 Remain'd : beside him, on a splendid throne,
 Divine *Arete* and *Alcinous* shone. }

The Queen, on nearer view, the guest survey'd
 Rob'd in the garments her own hands had made;
 Not without wonder seen. Then thus began, 316
 Her words addressing to the god-like man.

Cam'st thou not hither, wond'rous stranger! say,
 From lands remote, and o'er a length of sea?
 Tell then whence art thou? whence that Princely
 air? 320

And robes like these, so recent and so fair!

Hard is the task, oh Princess! you impose :
 (Thus sighing spoke the Man of many Woes)

ψ. 322. *Hard is the task, oh Princess!*] *Æneas* in *Virgil* speaks to *Venus* after the same manner, as *Ulysses* to *Arete*.

“ O Dea, si primâ repetens ab origine pergam,
 “ Et vacet annales nostrorum audire laborum,
 “ Ante diem clauso componet vesper Olympo.”

Scaliger observes that *Virgil* so far exceeds the verses of *Homer*, that they will not even bear a comparison; he is superior almost in every word; for instance; he renders, διηνεκέως, by *primâ ab origine*, and adds the word *vacet* beautifully; and still more beautifully he translates πολλά κήδεα, *annales nostrorum audire laborum*; and lastly he paraphrases the word ἀργαλέον by a most harmonious line,



138 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

The long, the mournful series to relate
Of all my sorrows, sent by heav'n and fate! 325
Yet what you ask, attend. An Island lies
Beyond these tracts, and under other skies,

“ *Ante diem clauso componet vesper Olympo.*”

Which excellently describes the multitude of the sufferings of *Æneas*, which could not be comprehended in the relation of a whole day.

I will not deny but that *Virgil* excels *Homer* in this and many other passages which he borrows from him: but then is it a just conclusion to infer, after the manner of *Scaliger*, that *Virgil* is a better Poet than *Homer*? To conclude from particulars to generals is a false way of arguing. It is as if in a comparison of two persons, a man should from single features give a superiority of beauty, which is only to be gathered from the symmetry of the whole body.

†. 326. *Yet what you ask, attend.* —] *Homer* here gives a summary of the subject of the two preceding books: this recapitulation cannot indeed be avoided, because it is necessary to let *Alcinous* into his story, and this cannot be done without a repetition; but generally all repetitions are tedious: the reader is offended when that is related which he knows already: he receives no new instruction to entertain his judgment, nor any new descriptions to excite his curiosity, and by these means the very soul of Poetry is extinguished, and it becomes unspirited and lifeless. When therefore repetitions are absolutely necessary, they ought always to be short; and I may appeal to the Reader if he is not tired with many in *Homer*, especially when made in the very same words? Here indeed *Ulysses* tells his story but in part; the Queen asked him who he was, but he passes over this without any reply, and reserves the greatest part of his story to a time of more *leisure*, that he may discover himself to a better advantage before the whole Peerage of the *Phæacians*. I do not



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 139

Ogygia named, in *Ocean's* wat'ry arms :
Where dwells *Calypso*, dreadful in her charms !
Remote from Gods or men she holds her rein,
Amid the terrours of the rolling main. 331

always condemn even the verbal repetitions of *Homer* ; sometimes as in embassies they may be necessary, because every word is stamped with authority, and perhaps they might be customary in *Homer's* times ; if they were not, he had too fruitful an invention not to have varied his thoughts and expressions. *Bosſu* observes, that with respect to repetitions, *Virgil* is more exact than *Homer* ; for instance, in the first book of the *Æneis*, when *Æneas* is repeating his sufferings to *Venus*, she interrupts him to give him comfort ;

— — — “ Nec plura querentem
“ Passa Venus, medio sic interfata dolore est.”

and in the third book, where good manners obliged this Hero to relate his story at the request of *Andromache*, the Poet prevents it by introducing *Helenus*, who hinders the repetition.

ψ. 330. *Remote from Gods or men she holds her rein.*] *Homer* has the secret art of introducing the best instructions, in the midst of the plainest narrations. He has described the unworthy passion of the Goddess *Calypso*, and the indecent advances she made to detain him from his country. It is possible this relation might make some impressions upon the mind of the Reader, inconsistent with exact Morality : what antidote then does *Homer* administer to expel this poison ? he does not content himself with setting the chastity of *Penelope* in opposition to the loose desires of *Calypso*, and shewing the great advantage the Mortal has over the Goddess ; but he here discovers the fountain from whence this weakness rises, by saying, that neither man nor Gods frequented this Island ; on one hand the absence of the Gods, and on the other the infrequency of objects, made her yield at the sight of the



140 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

Me, only me, the hand of fortune bore
 Unblest ! to tread that interdicted shore :
 When *Jove* tremendous in the fable deeps
 Lanch'd his red lightning at our scatter'd ships : 335
 Then, all my fleet, and all my foll'wers lost,
 Sole on a plank, on boiling surges tost,
 Heav'n drove my wreck th' *Ogygian* Isle to find,
 Full nine days floating to the wave and wind.
 Met by the Goddess there with open arms, 340
 She brib'd my stay with more than human charms ;
 Nay promis'd, vainly promis'd, to bestow
 Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.
 But all her blandishments successless prove,
 To banish from my breast my country's love. 345

first that appears. Every object is dangerous in solitude, especially as *Homer* expresses it, if we have no commerce with the Gods. *Dacier*.

ψ. 344. *But all her blandishments successless prove,——]* *Dacier* from *Eustathius* assigns the reason of the refusal of *Ulysses* to comply with the proffers of *Calypso*, to forsake his wife and country : it was, because he knew that women in love promise more than they either can, or intend to perform. An insinuation, that he would have complied if he had thought the Goddess would, or could have performed her promises. But this is contrary to the character of *Ulysses*, whose greatest glory it is, not to have listened even to a Goddess. In this view he ceases to be an Hero, and his return is no longer a virtue, but he returns only because he found not a temptation sufficient to keep him from his country.



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 141

I stay reluctant sev'n continu'd years,
And water her ambrosial couch with tears.
The eighth, she voluntary moves to part,
Or urg'd by *Jove*, or her own changeful heart.
A Raft was form'd to cross the surging sea ; 350
Herself supply'd the stores and rich array ;
And gave the gales to waft me on the way. }
In sev'nteen days appear'd your pleasing coast,
And woody mountains half in vapours lost. 354
Joy touch'd my soul : my soul was joy'd in vain,
For angry *Neptune* rous'd the raging main ;
The wild winds whistle, and the billows roar ; }
The splitting Raft the furious tempest tore ;
And storms vindictive intercept the shore. }
Soon as their rage subsides, the seas I brave 360
With naked force, and shoot along the wave,
To reach this Isle : but there my hopes were lost,
The surge impell'd me on a craggy coast.
I chose the safer sea, and chanc'd to find
A river's mouth impervious to the wind, 365
And clear of rocks. I fainted by the flood ;
Then took the shelter of the neighb'ring wood.



'Twas night; and cover'd in the foliage deep,
Jove plung'd my senses in the death of sleep.
 All night I slept, oblivious of my pain: 370
Aurora dawn'd, and *Phæbus* shin'd in vain,
 Nor 'till oblique he stop'd his ev'ning ray,
 Had *Somnus* dry'd the balmy dew's away.
 Then female voices from the shore I heard:
 A maid amidst them, Goddess-like, appear'd: 375
 To her I su'd, she pity'd my distress;
 Like thee in beauty, nor in virtue less.
 Who from such youth cou'd hope confid'rate care?
 In youth and beauty wisdom is but rare!

ψ. 379. *In youth and beauty wisdom is but rare!*] In the preceding line *Ulysses* speaks of *Nausicaa*, yet immediately changes the words into the Masculine gender, for grammatically it ought to be νεαρτέρῃς ἀνδράσασιν. *Homer* makes this alteration to pay the greater compliment to *Nausicaa*, and he intends to express by it, that neither woman nor man of her years could be expected to have such remarkable discretion. *Eustathius*.

Such sentences being very frequent in the *Odyssey*; it may not be improper to observe, of what beauty a sentence is in *Epick Poetry*. A Sentence may be defined, a moral instruction couched in a few words. *Rapin* asserts, that sentences are more proper in *Dramatick* than *Heroick Poetry*: for Narration is the essential character of it, and it ought to be one continued thread of discourse, simple and natural, without an affectation of figures, or moral reflections: that energy which



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 143

She gave me life, reliev'd with just supplies 380
My wants, and lent these robes that strike your eyes.
This is the truth : and oh ye pow'rs on high !
Forbid that want should sink me to a lye.

To this the King. Our daughter but exprest
Her cares imperfect to our god-like guest. 385

some pretend to collect and inclose within a small compass of words, is wont extremely to weaken the rest of the discourse, and give it a forced air : it seems to jut out of the structure of the Poem, and to be independent of it : he blames *Homer* for scattering his sentences too plentifully through his Poesy, and calls it an affectation and imperfection. These objections would undoubtedly be of weight, if the sentences were so introduced as to break the thread of narration, as *Rapin* rightly observes. But is this the case with relation to *Homer* ? He puts them into the mouth of the Actors themselves, and the narration goes on without the least interruption ; it is not the Poet who speaks, nor does he suspend the narration to make a refined reflection, or give us a sentence of Morality. Is his Poetry the worse, because he makes his agents speak weightily and sententiously ? It is true, sentences used without moderation are absurd in Epick Poetry ; they give it a seriousness that is more becoming the gravity of Philosophers, than the Spirit and Majesty of Poetry. *Bossu* judiciously observes, that such thoughts have in their very nature a certain kind of calm Wisdom that is contrary to the passions ; but, says he, sentences make a Poem useful, and it seems natural to imagine, that the more a work is embellished with them, the more it deserves that general approbation which *Horace* promises to those who have the art to mix the profitable with the pleasant. In short, sentences are not only allowable, but beautiful in Heroick Poetry, if they are introduced with propriety and without affectation.



144 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

Suppliant to her, since first he chose to pray,
Why not herself did she conduct the way,
And with her handmaids to our court convey? }

Hero and King! (*Ulysses* thus reply'd)
Nor blame her faultless, nor suspect of pride: 390
She bade me follow in th' attendant train;
But fear and rev'rence did my steps detain,
Left rash suspicion might alarm thy mind:
Man's of a jealous and mistaking kind.

‡. 391. *She bade me follow ———*
But fear and rev'rence, &c.]

This is directly contrary to what is before asserted in the preceding book, where *Nausicaa* forbids *Ulysses* to attend her, to avoid suspicion and slander. Is not *Ulysses* then guilty of falshood, and is not falshood beneath the character of a Hero? *Eustathius* confesses that *Ulysses* is guilty, φανέρως ψεύδειναι; and he adds, that a wise man may do sometimes opportunely: "Ὅπερ ἂν ποιήσειεν ἐν καιρῷ ὁ σοφός. I fear this concession of the Bishop's would not pass for good casuistry in these ages. *Spondanus* is of the same opinion as *Eustathius*; *Vir prudens certo loco & tempore mendaciis officiosissimis uti novit*. *Dacier* confesses that he somewhat disguises the truth. It will be difficult to vindicate *Ulysses* from the imputation, if the notions of truth and falshood were as strict in former, as in these ages: but we must not measure by this standard: it is certain that anciently Lying was reckoned no crime by a whole nation; and it still bears a dispute, *An omne falsi-loquium sit mendacium?* Some Casuists allow of the *officiosum mendacium*, and such is this of *Ulysses*, intirely complimentary and officious.



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 145

Far from my soul (he cry'd) the Gods efface
 All wrath ill-grounded, and suspicion base! 395
 Whate'er is honest, Stranger, I approve,
 And would to *Phæbus*, *Pallas*, and to *Jove*,
 Such as thou art, thy thought and mine were one,
 Nor thou unwilling to be call'd my son. 400
 In such alliance could'st thou wish to join,
 A Palace stor'd with treasures should be thine.

✱. 400. *Nor thou unwilling to be call'd my son.*] The Ancients observe, that *Alcinous* very artfully inserts this proposition to *Ulysses*, to prove his veracity. If he had embraced it without hesitation, he would have concluded him an impostor; for it is not conceivable that he should reject all the temptation to marriage made him by *Calypso* a Goddess, and yet immediately embrace this offer of *Alcinous* to marry his daughter. But if we take the passage in another sense, and believe that *Alcinous* spoke sincerely without any secret suspicions, yet his conduct is justifiable. It has I confess appeared shocking, that *Alcinous*, a King, should at the very first interview offer his daughter to a stranger, who might be a vagrant and impostor: but examples are frequent in antiquity of marriages thus concluded between strangers, and with as little hesitation: thus *Bellerophon*, *Tydeus*, and *Polinyces* were married. Great personages regarded not riches, but were only solicitous to procure worthy husbands for their daughters, and birth and virtue were the best recommendations.

It is observable that in the original there is a chasm, an Infinitive mood without any thing to govern it; we must therefore supply the word *ἐθέλοις* to make it right construction. *Eustathius*.



But if reluctant, who shall force thy stay? }
Jove bids to set the stranger on his way, }
 And ships shall wait thee with the morning }
 ray. } 405

'Till then, let slumber close thy careful eyes ; }
 The wakeful mariners shall watch the skies, }
 And seize the moment when the breezes rise : }
 Then gently waft thee to the pleasing shore,
 Where thy soul rests, and labour is no more. 410
 Far as *Eubæa* tho' thy country lay,
 Our ships with ease transport thee in a day.
 Thither of old, Earth's * Giant-son to view,
 On wings of winds with *Radamanth* they
 flew :

†. 411. *Far as Eubæa tho' thy country lay.*] *Eubæa*, as *Eustathius* observes, is really far distant from *Corcyra*, the country of the *Phæacians* : but *Alcinous* still makes it more distant, by placing it in another part of the World, and describing it as one of the fortunate Islands : for in the fourth book *Rhadamanthus* is said to inhabit the *Elysian* fields. *Alcinous* therefore endeavours to have it believed that his Isle is near those fields, by asserting that *Rhadamanthus* made use of *Phæacian* vessels in his voyage to *Tityus*. *Eustathius* further adds, that *Rhadamanthus* was a Prince of great justice, and *Tityus* a person of great impiety, and that he made this voyage to bring him over to more virtuous dispositions.

* *Tityus*.



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 147

This land, from whence their morning course
begun, 415

Saw them returning with the setting sun.

†. 415. *The land from whence their morning course begun,
Saw them returning with the setting sun.]*

If *Homer* had given the true situation of *Corcyra* as it really lies opposite to *Epirus*, yet the Hyperbole of sailing thence to *Eubæa* and returning in the same day, had been utterly an impossibility ; for in sailing thither, they must pass the *Ionian* and *Icarian* seas, and double the *Peloponnesus*. But the fiction is yet more extravagant, by the Poet's placing it still more distant near the *Fortunate Islands*. But what is impossible for vessels to effect, that are as swift as birds, and can sail with the rapidity of a thought ? *Eustathius*.

But then is the Poet justifiable for relating such incredible amplifications ? It may be answered, if he had put these extravagancies into the mouth of *Ulysses*, he had been unpardonable, but they suit well with the character of *Alcinous* : they let *Ulysses* into his disposition, and he appears to be ignorant, credulous, and ostentatious. This was necessary, that *Ulysses* might know how to adapt himself to his humour, and engage his assistance ; and this he actually brings about by raising his wonder and esteem by stories, that could not fail to please such an ignorant and credulous person as *Alcinous*.

Dacier adds, that the *Phæacians* were so puff'd up with their constant felicity and the protection of the Gods, that they thought nothing impossible ; upon this opinion all these Hyperboles are founded : and this agrees too well with human nature ; the more happy men are, the more high and extravagantly they talk, and are too apt to entertain themselves with wild chimæras, which have no existence but in the imagination.

The moral then to these fables of *Alcinous* is, that a constant series of happiness intoxicates the mind, and that moderation is often learned in the school of adversity.



148 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VII.

Your eyes shall witness and confirm my tale,
Our youth how dext'rous, and how fleet our fail,
When justly tim'd with equal sweep they row,
And Ocean whitens in long tracks below. 420

Thus he. No word th' experienc'd man replies,
But thus to heav'n (and heav'nward lifts his eyes)
O *Jove* ! oh father ! what the King accords
Do thou make perfect ! sacred be his words !
Wide o'er the world *Alcinous*' glory shine ! 425
Let Fame be his, and ah ! my country mine !

Meantime *Arete*, for the hour of rest
Ordains the fleecy couch, and cov'ring vest :
Bids her fair train the purple quilts prepare,
And the thick carpets spread with busy care. 430
With torches blazing in their hands they pass,
And finish'd all their Queen's command with haste.

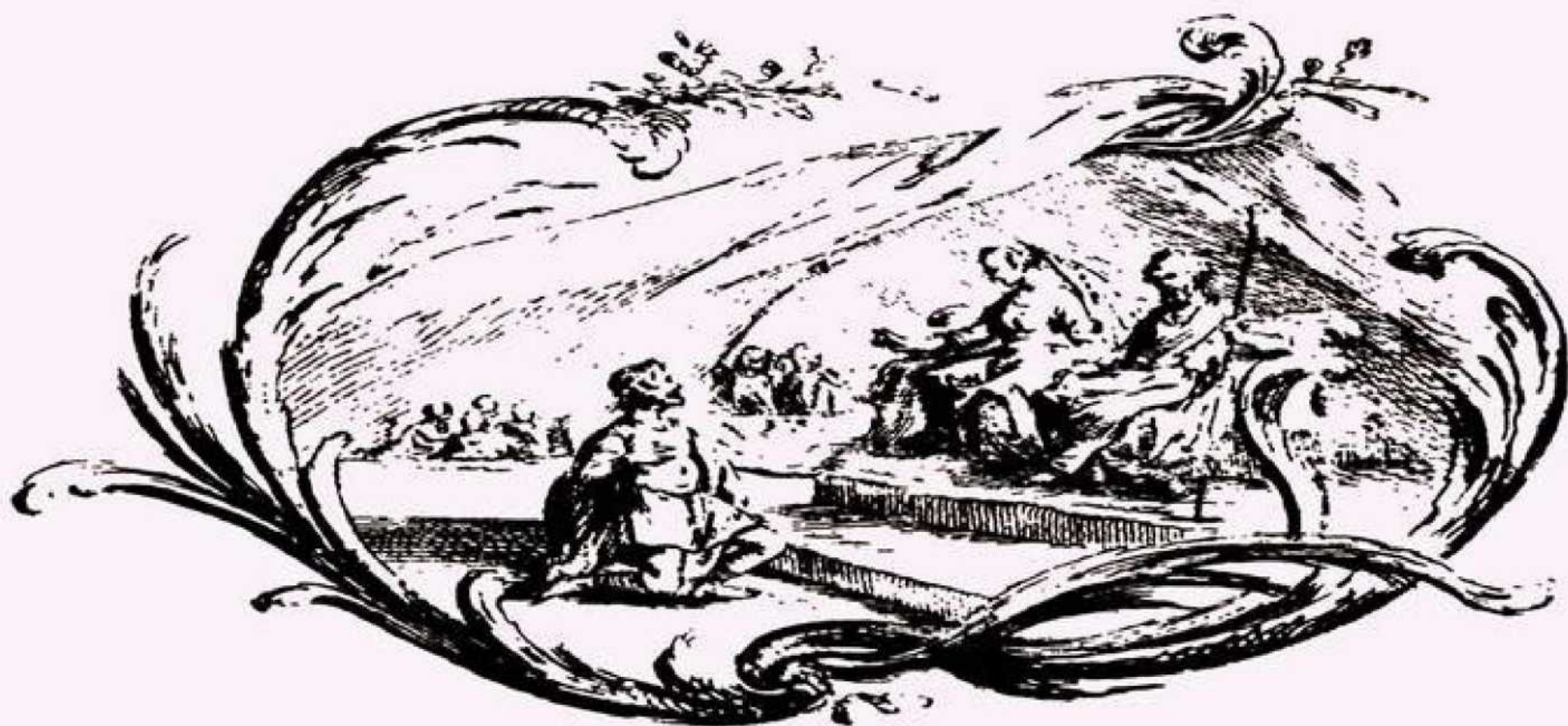
ψ. 423. *The prayer of Ulysses.*] It is observable, that *Ulysses* makes no reply directly to the obliging proposition which the King made concerning his daughter. A refusal might have been disadvantageous to his present circumstances; yet an answer is implied in this prayer, which shews the impatience he has to return to his country, and the gratitude he feels for his promises to effect it : and consequently it discovers that he has no intentions of settling with his daughter amongst the *Phæacians*. *Dacier*.



Then gave the signal to the willing guest :
He rose with pleasure, and retir'd to rest.
There, soft-extended, to th' murm'ring sound 435
Of the high porch, *Ulysses* sleeps profound !
Within, releas'd from cares *Alcinous* lies ;
And fast beside, were clos'd *Arete's* eyes.

✱. 437, 438. *The last lines.*] It may seem somewhat extraordinary, that *Alcinous* and his Queen who have been described as patterns of conjugal happiness should sleep in distinct beds. *Jupiter* and *Juno*, as *Dacier* observes from the first of the *Iliad*, have the same bed. Perhaps the Poet designed to shew the luxury and false delicacy of those too happy *Phæacians*, who lived in such softness that they shunned every thing that might prove troublesome or incommodious.

This book takes up no longer time than the evening of the thirty-second day.





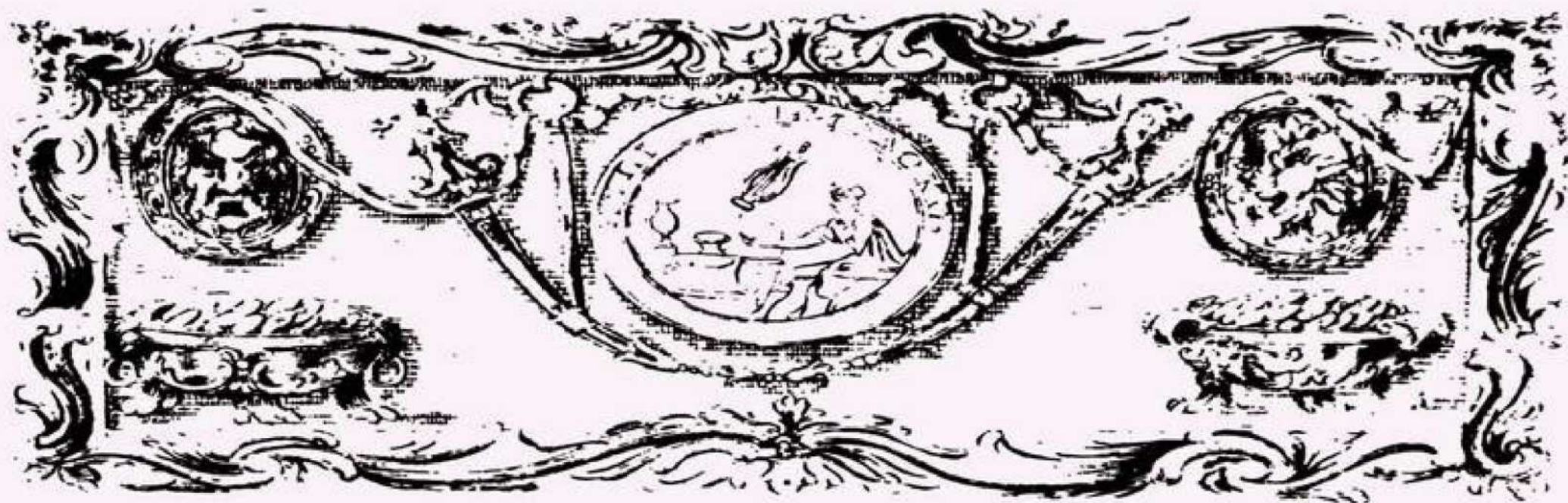
THE
EIGHTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.





The A R G U M E N T.

ALCINOUS calls a Council, in which it is resolved to transport Ulysses into his country. After which splendid entertainments are made, where the celebrated Musician and Poet Demodocus plays and sings to the guests. They next proceed to the games, the race, the wrestling, Discus, &c. where Ulysses casts a prodigious length, to the admiration of all the spectators. They return again to the banquet, and Demodocus sings the loves of Mars and Venus. Ulysses, after a compliment to the Poet, desires him to sing the introduction of the wooden horse into Troy; which subject provoking his tears, Alcinous enquires of his guest, his name, parentage, and fortunes.



THE
* EIGHTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

NOW fair *Aurora* lifts her golden ray,
And all the ruddy Orient flames with day :
Alcinous, and the chief, with dawning light,
Rose instant from the slumbers of the night ;

* This book has been more severely censured by the Criticks than any in the whole *Odysssey* : it may therefore be thought necessary to lay before the Reader what may be offered in the Poet's vindication.

Scaliger in his *Poeticks* is very warm against it. *Demodocus*, observes that Critick, sings the lust of the Gods (*foeditates*) at the feast of *Alcinous*. And *Bossu*, though he vindicates the Poet, remarks that we meet with some offensive passages in *Homer*, and instances in the adultery of *Mars* and *Venus*.



154 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VIII.

Then to the Council-seat they bend their way, 5
And fill the shining thrones along the bay.

To know (says *Aristotle* in his *Art of Poetry*) whether a thing be well or ill spoken, we must not only examine the thing whether it be good or ill, but we must also have regard to him that speaks or acts, and to the person to whom the Poet addresses; for the character of the person who speaks, and of him to whom he speaks, makes that to be good, which would not come well from the mouth of any other person. It is not this account we vindicate *Homer* with respect to the Immorality that is found in the fable of the Adultery of *Mars* and *Venus*: we must consider that it is neither the Poet, nor his Hero, that recites that story: but a *Phæacian* sings it to *Phæacians*, a soft effeminate people, at a festival. Besides, it is allowable even in grave and moral writings to introduce vicious persons, who despise the Gods; and is not the Poet obliged to adapt his Poetry to the characters of such Persons? And had it not been an absurdity in him to have given us a Philosophical or Moral song before a People who would be pleased with nothing but gaiety and effeminacy? The Moral that we are to draw from this story is, that an idle and soft course of life is the source of all criminal pleasures; and that those persons who lead such lives, are generally pleased to hear such stories, as make their betters partakers in the same vices. This relation of *Homer* is a useful lesson to them who desire to live virtuously; and it teaches, that if we would not be guilty of such vices, we must avoid such a method of life as inevitably leads to the practice of them.

Rapin attacks this book on another side, and blames it not for its Immorality, but Lowness. *Homer*, says he, puts off that air of grandeur and majesty which so properly belongs to his character; he debases himself into a Droll, and sinks into a familiar way of talking: he turns things into ridicule, by endeavouring to entertain his Reader with something pleasant and diverting: for instance, in the eighth book



BOOK VII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 155

Meanwhile *Minerva*, in her guardian care,
Shoots from the starry vault thro' fields of air ;
In form, a herald of the King she flies
From Peer to Peer, and thus incessant cries. 10

of the *Odyssey*, he entertains the Gods with a Comedy, some of whom he makes buffoons : *Mars* and *Venus* are introduced upon the stage, taken in a net laid by *Vulcan*, contrary to the gravity which is so essential to Epick Poetry.

It must be granted, that the Gods are here painted in colours unworthy of Deities, yet still with propriety, if we respect the spectators ; who are ignorant, debauched *Phæacians*. *Homer* was obliged to draw them, not according to his own idea of the Gods, but according to the wild fancies of the *Phæacians*. The Poet is not at liberty to ascribe the wisdom of a *Socrates* to *Alcinous* : he must follow Nature, and like a painter, he may draw Deities or monsters, and introduce, as he pleases, either vicious or virtuous characters, provided he always makes them of a piece, consistent with their first representation.

This rule of *Aristotle* in general, vindicates *Homer*, and it is necessary to carry it in our minds, because it ought to be applied to all incidents that relate to the *Phæacians*, in the sequel of the *Odyssey*.

✧. 6. *And fill the shining thrones along the bay.*] This place of Council was between the two ports, where the Temple of *Neptune* stood ; probably, like that in the second book, open to the air.

✧. 9. *In form, a herald —*] It may be asked what occasion there is to introduce a Goddess, to perform an action that might have been as well executed by a real Herald ? *Eustathius* observes, that this *Minerva* is either Fame, which informs the *Phæacians* that a stranger of uncommon figure is arrived, and upon this report they assemble ; or it implies, that this assembly was made by the wisdom of the Peers, and con-



156 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

Nobles and Chiefs who rule *Phæacia's* states,
The King in council your attendance waits :
A Prince of grace divine your aid implores,
O'er unknown seas arriv'd from unknown shores.

She spoke, and sudden with tumultuous sounds
Of thronging multitudes the shore rebounds : 16
At once the seats they fill : and every eye
Gaz'd, as before some brother of the sky.
Pallas, with grace divine his form improves,
More high he treads, and more enlarg'd he moves :

frequently a Poet may ascribe it to the Goddess of Wisdom, it being the effect of her inspiration.

The Poet by the introduction of a Deity warns us, that something of importance is to succeed ; this is to be ushered in with solemnity, and consequently the appearance of *Minerva* in this place is not unnecessary : the action of importance to be described is no less than the change of the fortunes of *Ulysses* ; it is from this assembly that his affairs take a new turn, and hasten to a happy re-establishment.

ψ. 13. *A Prince of form divine* —] *Minerva* speaks thus in favour of *Ulysses*, to excite the curiosity of the *Phæacians* : and indeed the short speech is excellently adapted to this purpose. They were fond of strangers : the Goddess therefore tells them, that a stranger is arrived of a God-like appearance. They admired outward show, he is therefore described as a man of extraordinary beauty, and *Minerva* for this reason immediately improves it. *Eustathius*.

ψ. 19. *Pallas with grace divine his form improves.*] This circumstance has been repeated several times almost in the same words, since the beginning of the *Odyssey*. I cannot be of



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 157

She sheds celestial bloom, regard to draw ; 21
And gives a dignity of mien, to awe ;
With strength, the future prize of fame to play,
And gather all the honours of the day.

Then from his glitt'ring throne *Alcinous* rose : 25
Attend, he cry'd, while we our will disclose.

opinion that such repetitions are beauties. In any other Poet, they might have been thought to proceed from a poverty of invention, though certainly not in *Homer*, in whom there is rather a superfluity than barrenness. Perhaps having once said a thing well, he despaired of improving it, and so repeated it ; or perhaps he intended to inculcate this truth, that all our accomplishments, as beauty, strength, &c. are the gifts of the Gods ; and being willing to fix it upon the mind, he dwells upon it, and inserts it in many places. Here indeed it has a particular propriety, as it is a circumstance that first engages the *Phæacians* in the favour of *Ulysses* : his beauty was his first recommendation, and consequently the Poet with great judgment sets his Hero off to the best advantage, it being an incident from which he dates all his future happiness ; and therefore to be insisted upon with a particular solemnity. *Plato* in his *Theætetus* applies the latter part of this description to *Parmenides*. Αἰδοῖός τε μοι φαίνεται εἶναι, ἅμα δεινός τε.

ψ. 25. *From his glitt'ring throne Alcinous rose.*] It might be expected that *Ulysses*, upon whose account alone *Alcinous* calls this assembly, should have made his condition known, and spoken himself to the *Phæacians* ; whereas he appears upon the stage as a mute person, and the multitude departs intirely ignorant of his name and fortunes. It may be answered, that this was not a proper time for a fuller discovery, the Poet defers it till *Ulysses* had distinguished himself in the games, and fully raised their curiosity. It is for the same reason that *Ulysses* is silent ; if he had spoken, he could not



158 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

Your present aid this god-like stranger craves,
 Toft by rude tempeft thro' a war of waves ;
 Perhaps from realms that view the rifing day,
 Or nations fubject to the western ray. 30
 Then grant, what here all fons of woe obtain,
 (For here affliction never pleads in vain :)
 Be chofen youths prepar'd, expert to try
 The vaft profound, and bid the vefſel fly :
 Lanch the tall bark, and order ev'ry oar ; 35
 Then in our court indulge the genial hour.

have avoided to let them into the knowledge of his condition, but the contrary method is greatly for his advantage, and affures him of fucceſs from the recommendation of a King.

But there is another, and perhaps a better reaſon, to be given for this ſilence of *Ulyſſes* : the Poet reſerves the whole ſtory of his ſufferings for an entire and uninterrupted narration ; if he had now made any diſcovery, he muſt afterwards either have fallen into tautology, or broken the thread of the relation, ſo that it would not have been of a piece, but wanted continuity. Beſides, it comes with more weight at once, than if it had been made at ſeveral times, and conſequently makes a deeper impreſſion upon the memory and paſſion of the auditors. *Virgil* has taken a different method in the diſcovery of *Æneas* ; there was a neceſſity for it ; his companions, to engage *Dido* in their protection, tell her they belong to no leſs a Hero than *Æneas*, ſo that he is in a manner known before he appears ; but *Virgil* after the example of *Homer* reſerves his ſtory for an entire narration.

ſ. 35. *Lanch the tall bark* —] The word in the original is πρῶτον πλοῦς ; which ſignifies not only a ſhip that makes its firſt voyage, but a ſhip that outſails other ſhips, as *Enſlathius*



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 159

Instant, you failors, to this task attend ;
 Swift to the palace, all ye Peers ascend ;
 Let none to strangers honours due disclaim :
 Be there *Demodocus*, the Bard of fame, 40
 Taught by the Gods to please, when high he sings
 The vocal lay, responsive to the strings.

Thus spoke the Prince : th' attending Peers obey,
 In state they move ; *Alcinous* leads the way :
 Swift to *Demodocus* the herald flies, 45
 At once the failors to their charge arise :
 They lanch the vessel, and unfurl the fails,
 And stretch the swelling canvas to the gales ;

observes. It is not possible for a translator to retain such singularities with any beauty ; it would seem pedantry and affectation, and not Poetry.

41. *Taught by the Gods to please*——] *Homer* here insinuates that all good and great qualities are the gifts of God. He shews us likewise, that Musick was constantly made use of in the courts of all the Oriental Princes ; we have seen *Phemius* in *Ithaca*, a second in *Lacedæmon* with *Menelaus*, and *Demodocus* here with *Alcinous*. The *Hebrews* were likewise of remarkable skill in Musick ; every one knows what effect the harp of *David* had upon the spirit of *Saul*. *Solomon* tells us, that he sought out singing men and singing women to entertain him like these in *Homer*, at the time of feasting : thus another oriental Writer compares Musick at feasts to an emerald inclosed in gold ; *as a signet of an emerald set in a work of gold, so is the melody of musick with pleasant wine*. *Ecclus xxxii. 6. Dacier.*



160 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

Then to the palace move : A gath'ring throng,
 Youth, and white age, tumultuous pour along : 50
 Now all access to the dome are fill'd ;
 Eight boars, the choicest of the herd, are kill'd :
 Two beeves, twelve fatlings from the flock they
 bring

To crown the feast ; so wills the bounteous King.
 The herald now arrives, and guides along 55
 The sacred master of celestial song :
 Dear to the Muse ! who gave his days to flow
 With mighty blessings, mix'd with mighty woe :

ψ. 57. *Dear to the Muse ! who gave his days to flow
 With mighty blessings, mix'd with mighty woe.]*

It has been generally thought that *Homer* represents himself in the person of *Demodocus* ; and *Dacier* imagines that this passage gave occasion to the Ancients to believe that *Homer* was blind. But that he really was blind is testified by himself in his Hymn to *Apollo*, which *Thucydides* asserts to be the genuine production of *Homer*, and quotes it as such in his history.

ὦ κῆραι, τίς δ' ὕμνῳ ἀνὴρ, ἥδιστα ἀοιδῶν,
 Ἐνθάδε πωλεῖται ; καὶ τῷ τέρπεσθε μάλιχα ;
 Τρεῖς δ' εὖ μάλα πᾶσαι ὑποκρίνασθε, ἀφ' ὑμέων
 Τυφλὸς ἀνὴρ — — —

That is, “ O Virgins, if any person asks you who is he,
 “ the most pleasing of all Poets, who frequents this place,
 “ and who is he who most delights you ? reply, he is a blind
 “ man, &c.” It is true, as *Eustathius* observes, that there



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 161

With clouds of darkness quench'd his visual ray,
 But gave him skill to raise the lofty lay. 60
 High on a radiant throne sublime in state,
 Encircled by huge multitudes, he sat :
 With silver shone the throne ; his Lyre well strung
 To rapturous sounds, at hand *Pontonicus* hung :
 Before his seat a polish'd table shines, 65
 And a full goblet foams with gen'rous wines :
 His food a herald bore : and now they fed ;
 And now the rage of craving hunger fled.

are many features in the two Poets that bear a great resemblance ; *Demodocus* sings divinely, the same is true of *Homer* ; *Demodocus* sings the adventures of the *Greeks* before *Troy*, so does *Homer* in his *Iliad*.

If this be true, it must be allowed that *Homer* has found out a way of commending himself very artfully : had he spoken plainly, he had been extravagantly vain ; but by this indirect way of praise, the Reader is at liberty to apply it either solely to *Demodocus*, or obliquely to *Homer*.

It is remarkable, that *Homer* takes a very extraordinary care of *Demodocus* his brother Poet ; and introduces him as a person of great distinction. He calls him in this book the Hero *Demodocus* : he places him on a throne studded with silver, and gives him an herald for his attendant ; nor is he less careful to provide for his entertainment, he has a particular table, and a capacious bowl set before him to drink as often as he had a mind, as the original expresses it. Some merry wits have turned the last circumstance into raillery, and insinuate that *Homer* in this place, as well as in the former, means himself in the person of *Demodocus* ; an intimation, that he would not be displeased to meet with the like hospitality.



Then fir'd by all the Muse, aloud he sings
 The mighty deeds of Demigods and Kings : 70
 From that fierce wrath the noble song arose,
 That made *Ulysses* and *Achilles* foes :
 How o'er the feast they doom the fall of *Troy* ;
 The stern debate *Atrides* hears with joy :
 For heav'n foretold the contest, when he
 trod 75

The marble threshold of the *Delpick* God,
 Curious to learn the counsels of the sky,
 E'er yet he loos'd the rage of war on *Troy*.

*. 74. *The stern debate, Atrides heard with joy.*] This passage is not without obscurity, but *Eustathius* thus explains it from *Athenæus*. In the *Iliad* the Generals sup with *Agamemnon* with sobriety and moderation ; and if in the *Odyssey* we see *Achilles* and *Ulysses* in contention to the great satisfaction of *Agamemnon*, it is because these contentions are of use to his affairs ; they contend whether force or stratagem is to be employed to take *Troy* ; *Achilles* after the death of *Hector*, persuaded to assault it by storm, *Ulysses* by stratagem. There is a further reason given for the satisfaction which *Agamemnon* expresses at the contest of these two Heroes : before the opening of the war of *Troy* he consulted the oracle concerning the issue of it ; *Apollo* answered, that *Troy* should be taken when two Princes most renowned, the one for wisdom and the other for valour should contend at a sacrifice of the Gods ; *Agamemnon* rejoices to see the prediction fulfilled, knowing that the destruction of *Troy* was at hand, the Oracle being accomplished by the contest of *Ulysses* and *Achilles*.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 163

Touch'd at the song, *Ulysses* straight resign'd
To soft affliction all his manly mind : 80

¶. 79. *Touch'd at the song* —] Many objections may be made against this relation ; it may seem to offend against probability, and appears somewhat incredible, that *Demodocus* should thus luckily pitch upon the war of *Troy* for the subject of his song, and still more happily upon the deeds of *Ulysses* ; for instance, a man may die of an Apoplexy, this is probable ; but that this should happen just when the Poet has occasion for it, is in some degree incredible. But this objection will cease, if we consider not only that the war of *Troy* was the greatest event of those ages, and consequently might be the common subject of entertainment ; but also that it is not *Homer* or *Demodocus* who relates the story, but the Muse who inspires it ; *Homer* several times in this book ascribes the song to immediate inspiration ; and this supernatural assistance reconciles it to human probability, and the story becomes credible when it is supposed to be related by a Deity. *Aristotle* in his *Poeticks* commends this conduct as artful and judicious ; *Alcinous*, says he, invites *Ulysses* to an entertainment to divert him, where *Demodocus* sings his actions, at which he cannot refrain from tears, which *Alcinous* perceives, and this brings about the discovery of *Ulysses*.

It may further be objected, that a sufficient cause for this violence of tears is not apparent ; for why should *Ulysses* weep to hear his own brave achievements, especially when nothing calamitous is recited ? This indeed would be improbable, if that were the whole of what the Poet sung : but *Homer* only gives us the heads of the song, a few sketches of a larger draught, and leaves something to be filled up by the imagination of the reader. Thus for instance, the words of *Demodocus* recalled to the mind of *Ulysses* all the hardships he had undergone during a ten years war, all the scenes of horror he had beheld, and the loss and sufferings of all his friends. And no doubt he might weep even for the calamities he brought upon *Troy*, an ingenuous nature cannot be insensible when any of its own species suffers ; the *Trojans*



164 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

Before his eyes the purple vest he drew,
 Industrious to conceal the falling dew :
 But when the musick paus'd, he ceas'd to shed
 The flowing tear, and rais'd his drooping head :
 And lifting to the Gods a goblet crown'd, 85
 He pour'd a pure libation to the ground.

Transported with the song, the list'ning train
 Again with loud applause demand the strain :
 Again *Ulysses* veil'd his pensive head,
 Again unmann'd a show'r of sorrow shed : 90
 Conceal'd he wept : the King observ'd alone
 The silent tear, and heard the secret groan :
 Then to the Bard aloud : O cease to sing,
 Dumb be thy voice, and mute th' harmonious string ;
 Enough the feast has pleas'd, enough the pow'r 95
 Of heav'nly song has crown'd the genial hour !
 Incessant in the games your strength display,
 Contest, ye brave, the honours of the day !
 That pleas'd th' admiring stranger may proclaim
 In distant regions the *Phæacian* fame : 100

were his enemies, but still they were men, and compassion is due even to unfortunate enemies. I doubt not but it will be allowed, that there is here sufficient cause to draw tears from a hero, unless a hero must be supposed to be divested of humanity.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 165

None wield the gauntlet with so dire a sway,
Or swifter in the race devour the way ;
None in the leap spring with so strong a bound,
Or firmer, in the wrestling, press the ground.

Thus spake the King; th' attending Peers obey :
In state they move, *Alcinous* leads the way : 106
His golden lyre *Demodocus* unstrung,
High on a column in the palace hung :
And guided by a herald's guardian cares,
Majestick to the lists of Fame repairs. 113

Now swarms the populace ; a countless throng
Youth and hoar age ; and man drives man along
The games begin ; Ambitious of the prize,
Acronus, *Thoön*, and *Eretneus* rise ;

ψ. 101. *None wield the gauntlet with so dire a sway.*] *Eustathius* asks how *Alcinous* could make such an assertion, and give the preference to his people before all nations, when he neither knew, nor was known to, any heroes out of his own Island ? He answers that he speaks like a *Phæacian*, with ostentation and vanity ; besides it is natural for all people to form, not illaudibly, too favourable a judgment of their own country : and this agrees with the character of the *Phæacians* in a more particular manner, who called themselves ἀρχιθεοὶ, and the favourites of the Gods.

ψ. 113. *The games —*] *Eustathius* remarks, that *Homer* very judiciously passes over these games in a few lines, having in the *Iliad* exhausted that subject ; he there enlarged up-



The prize *Ocyalus* and *Prymneus* claim, 115

Anchialus and *Ponteus*, chiefs of fame :

There *Proreus*, *Nautes*, *Eratreus* appear,

And fam'd *Amphialus*, *Polyneus*' heir :

Euryalus, like *Mars* terrifick, rose,

When clad in wrath he withers hosts of foes : 120

on them, because they were essential ornaments, it being necessary that *Patroclus* should be honoured by his friend with the utmost solemnity. Here they are only introduced occasionally, and therefore the Poet hastens to things more requisite, and carries on the thread of his story. But then it may be asked why are they mentioned at all, and what do they contribute to the re-establishment of *Ulysses*? It is evident that they are not without an happy effect, they give *Ulysses* an opportunity to signalize his character, to engage the King and the Peers in his favour, and this induces them to convey him to his own country, which is one of the most material incidents in the whole *Odysssey*.

§. 119. *Euryalus, like Mars terrifick, rose.*] I was at a loss for a reason why this figure of terrour was introduced amongst an unwarlike nation, upon an occasion contrary to the general description, in the midst of games and diversions. *Eustathius* takes notice, that the Poet distinguishes the character of *Euryalus*, to force it upon our observation; he being the Person who uses *Ulysses* with roughness and inhumanity, and is the only Peer that is described with a sword, which he gives to *Ulysses* to repair his injury.

He further remarks, that almost all the names of the persons who are mentioned as candidates in these games are borrowed from the sea, *Phæacia* being an Island, and the people greatly addicted to navigation. I have taken the liberty to vary from the order observed by *Homer* in the catalogue of the names, to avoid the affinity of sound in many of them, as *Euryalus*, *Ocyalus*, &c. and too many names being tedious, at least in *Eng-*



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 167

Naubolides with grace unequal'd shone,
Or equal'd by *Laodamas* alone.

With these came forth *Ambasineus* the strong ;
And three brave sons, from great *Alcinous* sprung.

Rang'd in a line the ready racers stand, 125
Start from the goal, and vanish o'er the strand :
Swift as on wings of wind upborn they fly,
And drifts of rising dust involve the sky :
Before the rest, what space the hinds allow
Between the mule and ox, from plough to plough ;

lish Poetry, I passed over the three sons of *Alcinous*, *Laodamas*, *Halius*, and *Clytoncus*, and only mentioned them in general as the sons of *Alcinous*.

I was surpris'd to see *Dacier* render

— — — — υἱὸς Πολυνέης Τεκλονίδαο.

The son of *Polyneus* the carpenter ; it looks like Burlesque : it ought to be rendered, The son of *Polyneus Tectonides*, a *Patronymick*, and it is so understood by all commentators.

ψ. 129. — — — *What space the hinds allow*

Between the mule and ox, from plough to plough.]

This image drawn from rural affairs is now become obsolete, and gives us no distinct Idea of the distance between *Clytoneus* and the other racers ; but this obscurity arises not from *Homer's* want of perspicuity, but from the change which has happened in the method of tillage, and from a length of time which has effaced the distinct image which was originally stamped upon it ; so that what was understood universally in the days of *Homer* is grown almost unintelligible to posterity. *Enstatbius* only observes, that the teams of Mules were placed



168 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

Clytonous sprung : he wing'd the rapid way, 131

And bore th' unrivall'd honours of the day.

With fierce embrace the brawny wrestlers join ;

The conquest, great *Euryalus*, is thine.

Amphialus sprung forward with a bound, 135

Superiour in the leap, a length of ground :

From *Elatreus*' strong arm the Discus flies,

And sings with unmatch'd force along the skies.

And *Laodam* whirls high, with dreadful sway,

The g'loves of death, victorious in the fray. 140

While thus the Peerage in the games contends,
In act to speak, *Laodamas* ascends :

O friends, he cries, the stranger seems well skill'd
To try th' illustrious labours of the field :

at some distance from the teams of Oxen ; the Mule being more swift in his labour than the Ox, and consequently more ground was allowed to the Mule than the Ox by the Husbandman. This gives us an Idea that *Clytoneus* was the foremost of the racers, but how much is not to be discovered with any certainty. *Aristarchus*, as *Didymus* informs us, thus interprets *Homer*. “ As much as a yoke of mules set to work
“ at the same time with a yoke of Oxen, outgoes the Oxen,
“ (for mules are swifter than oxen) so much *Clytoneus* out-
“ went his competitors.” The same description occurs in the tenth book of the *Iliad*, verse 419, to which passage I refer the Reader for a more large and different explication.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 169

I deem him brave; then grant the brave man's claim,
Invite the Hero to his share of fame. 146

What nervous arms he boasts! how firm his tread!
His limbs how turn'd! how broad his shoulders
spread!

By age unbroke! — but all-consuming care
Destroys perhaps the strength that time would spare:
Dire is the Ocean, dread in all its forms! 151
Man must decay, when man contends with storms.

Well hast thou spoke, (*Euryalus* replies)
Thine is the guest, invite him thou to rise.

✱. 149. *By age unbroke!*] It is in the original literally, *he wants not youth*; this is spoken according to appearance only, for *Ulysses* must be supposed to be above forty, having spent twenty years in the wars of *Troy*, and in his return to his country. It is true *Hesiod* calls a person a youth, αἰζηόν, who was forty years of age, but this must be understood with some allowance, unless we suppose that the life of man was longer in the times of *Hesiod*, than in these later ages; the contrary of which appears from many places in *Homer*, where the shortness of man's life is compared to the leaves of trees, &c. But what the Poet here relates is very justifiable, for the Youth which *Ulysses* appears to have, proceeds from *Minerva*; it is not a natural quality, but conferred by the immediate operation of a Goddess.

This speech concludes with an address of great beauty; *Laodamas* invites *Ulysses* to act in the games, yet at the same time furnishes him with a decent excuse, to decline the invitation if it be against his inclinations; should he refuse, he imputes the refusal to his calamities, not to any want of skill, or personal inability.



170 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

Swift at the word advancing from the croud 155
He made obeisance, and thus spoke aloud.

Vouchsafes the rev'rend stranger to display
His manly worth, and share the glorious day?
Father, arise! for thee thy port proclaims
Expert to conquer in the solemn games. 160
To fame arise! for what more fame can yield
Than the swift race, or conflict of the field?
Steal from corroding care one transient day,
To glory give the space thou hast to stay;
Short is the time, and lo! ev'n now the gales 165
Call thee aboard, and stretch the swelling sails.

To whom with sighs *Ulysses* gave reply:
Ah why th' ill-suiting pastime must I try?
To gloomy care my thoughts alone are free;
Ill the gay sports with troubled hearts agree: 170

✱. 167. ——— *Ulysses gave reply.*] These are the first words spoken by *Ulysses* before the *Phæacians*; and we cannot but be curious to know how he makes his address to engage a people, in whom he has no personal interest, in his favour. His speech is excellently adapted to this purpose: he represents himself as a suppliant to the King and all the assembly; and all suppliants being esteemed sacred, he at once makes it a duty in all the assembly to protect him; if they refuse to assist him, they become guilty of no less a crime, than a violation of the laws of hospitality.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 171

Sad from my natal hour my days have ran,
A much-afflicted, much-enduring man !
Who suppliant to the King and Peers, implores
A speedy voyage to his native shores.

Wide wanders, *Laodam*, thy erring tongue, 175
The sports of glory to the brave belong,
(Retorts *Euryalus* :) he boasts no claim
Among the great, unlike the sons of Fame.
A wand'ring merchant he frequents the main,
Some mean sea-farer in pursuit of gain ; 180
Studious of freight, in naval trade well skill'd,
But dreads th' athletick labours of the field.

Incens'd *Ulysses* with a frown replies,
O forward to proclaim thy soul unwise ! 184
With partial hands the Gods their gifts dispense ;
Some greatly think, some speak with manly sense ;
Here heav'n an elegance of form denies,
But wisdom the defect of form supplies :
This man with energy of thought controuls,
And steals with modest violence our souls, 190

ψ. 190. *And steals with modest violence our souls,
He speaks reserv'dly, but he speaks with force.]*

There is a difficulty in the Greek expression, ἀσφαλέως ἀγορεύειν, αἰδού μελιχρῆς; that is, “ he speaks securely with a winning mo-



172 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

He speaks reserv'dly, but he speaks with force,
Nor can one word be chang'd but for a worse ;
In publick more than mortal he appears,
And as he moves the gazing croud reveres.
While others beauteous as th' ætherial kind, 195
The nobler portion want, a knowing mind.
In outward show heav'n gives thee to excell,
But heav'n denies the praise of thinking well.

“deſty.” *Dionyſius Halicarnaffius* interprets it, in his *Examination of Oratory*, to ſignify that the orator argues *per con- ceſſa*, and ſo proceeds with certainty, or ἀσφαλέως; without danger of refutation. The word properly ſignifies without ſtumbling, ἀπερσκόπως, as in the proverb cited by *Euſtathius*, φορηλότερον ποσὶν ἢ περ γλῶττι περσκόπειν; that is, “it is better to “ ſtumble with the feet than with the tongue.” The words are concise, but of a very extenſive comprehension, and take in every thing, both in ſentiments and diction, that enters into the character of a compleat orator. *Dacier* concurs in the ſame interpretation; *He ſpeaks reſervedly, or with caution; he hazards nothing that he would afterwards wiſh (repentir) to alter. And all his words are full of ſweetneſs and modeſty.* Theſe two lines are found almoſt literally in *Hefiod's Theogony*, ſ. 92.

Ἐρχομένον δ' ἀνὰ ἄστρ, θεὸν ὥς ἱλάσκειν
Αἰδοῖ μελιχίη. Μετὰ δὲ πρέπει ἀγρομένοισιν.

Whether *Homer* borrowed theſe verſes from *Hefiod*, or *Hefiod* from *Homer*, is not evident. *Tully* in his book *de Senectute* is of opinion, that *Homer* preceded *Hefiod* many ages, and conſequently in his judgment the verſes are *Homer's*. I queſtion not but he had this very paſſage in view in his third book of his *Orator*. *Quem ſtupefaeti dicentem intuentur, quem Deum, ut ita dicam, inter homines putant;* which is almoſt a tranſlation of *Homer*.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S 'ODYSSEY. 173

Ill bear the brave a rude ungovern'd tongue,
 And, youth, my gen'rous soul resents the wrong :
 Skill'd in heroick exercise, I claim 201
 A post of honour with the sons of Fame :
 Such was my boast, while vigour crown'd my days,
 Now care furrounds me, and my force decays ;

*. 201. *Skill'd in heroick exercise, I claim*

A post of honour with the sons of Fame.]

It may be thought that *Ulysses*, both here and in his subsequent speech, is too ostentatious, and that he dwells more than modesty allows upon his own accomplishments : but self-praise is sometimes no fault. *Plutarch* has wrote a dissertation, how a man may praise himself without envy : what *Ulysses* here speaks is not a boast but a justification. Persons in distress, says *Plutarch*, may speak of themselves with dignity : it shews a greatness of soul, and that they bear up against the storms of fortune with bravery : they have too much courage to fly to pity and commiseration, which betray despair and an hopeless condition : such a man struggling with ill fortune shews himself a champion, and if by a bravery of speech he transforms himself from miserable and abject, into bold and noble, he is not to be censured as vain or obstinate, but great and invincible.

This is a full justification of *Ulysses*, he opposes virtue to calumny ; and what *Horace* applies to himself we apply to this Hero.

“ Quæsitam meritis, fume superbiam.”

Besides, it was necessary to shew himself a person of figure and distinction, to recommend his condition to the *Phæacians* : he was a stranger to the whole nation, and he therefore takes a probable method to engage their assistance by acquainting them with his worth ; he describes himself as unfortunate, but yet as a hero in adversity.



174 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book viii.

Inur'd a melancholy part to bear, 205

In scenes of death, by tempest and by war.

Yet thus by woes impair'd, no more I wave

To prove the hero. — Slander stings the brave.

Then striding forward with a furious bound,

He wrench'd a rocky fragment from the ground.

By far more pond'rous and more huge by far, 211

Than what *Phæacia's* sons discharg'd in air.

Fierce from his arm th' enormous load he flings ;

Sonorous thro' the shaded air it sings ;

Couch'd to the earth, tempestuous as it flies, 215

The crowd gaze upward while it cleaves the skies.

Beyond all marks, with many a giddy round

Down rushing, it up-turns a hill of ground.

That instant *Pallas*, bursting from a cloud,

Fix'd a distinguish'd mark, and cry'd aloud. 220

ψ. 219. *That instant Pallas, bursting from a cloud.*] There is not a passage in the whole *Odyssey*, where a Deity is introduced with less apparent necessity: the Goddess of Wisdom is brought down from heaven to act what might have been done as well by any of the spectators, namely to proclaim what was self-evident, the victory of *Ulysses*. When a Deity appears, our expectations are awakened for the introduction of something important, but what action of importance succeeds? It is true, her appearance encourages *Ulysses*, and immediately upon it he challenges the whole *Phæacian* assembly. But he was already victor, and no further action is performed.



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176 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book viii.

Stand forth, ye champions, who the gauntlet wield,
Or you, the swiftest racers of the field !

Stand forth, ye wrestlers, who these pastimes grace !

I wield the gauntlet, and I run the race. 236

In such heroick games I yield to none,

Or yield to brave *Laodamas* alone :

Shall I with brave *Laodamas* contend ?

A friend is sacred, and I stile him friend. 240

†. 139. *Shall I with brave Laodamas contend ?*

A friend is sacred, and I stile him friend.]

Nothing can be more artful than this address of *Ulysses* ; he finds a way in the middle of a bold challenge, to secure himself of a powerful advocate, by paying an ingenious and laudable deference to his friend. But it may be asked if decency be observed, and ought *Ulysses* to challenge the father *Alcinous* (for he speaks universally) and yet except his son *Laodamas*, especially when *Alcinous* was more properly his friend than *Laodamas* ? And why should he be excepted, rather than the other brothers ? *Spondanus* answers, that the two brothers are included in the person of *Laodamas*, they all have the same relation to *Ulysses*, as being equally a suppliant to them all, and consequently claim the same exemption from this challenge as *Laodamas* ; and *Alcinous* is not concerned in it : he is the judge and arbitrator of the games (not a candidate) like *Achilles* in the *Iliad*. But why is *Laodamas* named in particular ? He was the elder brother, and *Ulysses* might therefore be consigned to his care in particular, by the right due to his seniority ; besides, he might be the noblest personage, having conquered his antagonist at the gauntlet, which was the most dangerous, and consequently the most honourable exercise, and therefore *Ulysses* might pay him peculiar honours. *Spondanus*.



BOOK VIII: HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 177

Ungen'rous were the man, and base of heart,
 Who takes the kind, and pays th' ungrateful part ;
 Chiefly the man, in foreign realms confin'd,
 Base to his friend, to his own interest blind :
 All, all your heroes I this day defy ; 245
 Give me a man, that we our might may try.
 Expert in ev'ry art, I boast the skill
 To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill ;
 Should a whole host at once discharge the bow,
 My well-aim'd shaft with death prevents the foe :
 Alone superiour in the field of *Troy*, 251
 Great *Philoctetes* taught the shaft to fly.

x. 249. *Should a whole host at once discharge the bow,
 My well-aim'd shaft with death prevents the foe.]*

There is an ambiguity in the original, and it may imply either, that if *Ulysses* and his friends were at the same time to aim their arrows against an enemy, his arrow would fly with more certainty and expedition than that of his companions : or that if his enemies had bent all their bows at once against him, yet his shaft would reach his adversary before they could discharge their arrows. *Eustathius* follows the former, *Dacier* the latter interpretation. And certainly the latter argues the greater intrepidity and presence of mind : it shews *Ulysses* in the extremity of danger capable of acting with calmness and serenity, and shooting with the same certainty and steadiness, though multitudes of enemies endanger his life. I have followed this explication, as it is nobler, and shews *Ulysses* to be a consummate Hero.



178 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book VIII.

From all the sons of earth unrivall'd praise
 I justly claim ; but yield to better days,
 To those fam'd days when great *Alcides* rose, 255
 And *Eurytus*, who bade the Gods be foes :
 (Vain *Eurytus*, whose art became his crime,
 Swept from the earth he perish'd in his prime ;
 Sudden th' irremeable way he trod,
 Who boldly durst defy the Bowyer-God.) 260
 In fighting fields as far the spear I throw,
 As flies an arrow from the well drawn bow.
 Sole in the race the contest I decline,
 Stiff are my weary joints, and I resign

ψ. 257. *Vain Eurytus* ———] This *Eurytus* was King of *OEchalia*, famous for his skill in Archery ; he proposed his daughter *Iole* in marriage to any person that could conquer him at the exercise of the bow. Later writers differ from *Homer*, as *Eustathius* observes, concerning *Eurytus*. They write that *Hercules* overcame him, and he denying his daughter, was slain, and his daughter made captive by *Hercules* : whereas *Homer* writes that he was killed by *Apollo*, that is, died a sudden death, according to the import of that expression. The Ancients differ much about *OEchalia* ; some place it in *Eubœa*, and some in *Messenia*, of which opinion is *Pausanias*. But *Homer* in the *Iliad* places it in *Thessaly* : for he mentions with it *Tricca* and *Ithome*, which as *Dacier* observes were Cities of *Thessaly*.

ψ. 263. *Sole in the race the contest I decline.*] This is directly contrary to his challenge in the beginning of the speech.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 179

By storms and hunger worn : age well may fail, 265
When storms and hunger both at once assail.

where he mentions the race amongst the other games. How then is this difference to be reconciled? Very naturally. *Ulysses* speaks with a generous warmth, and is transported with anger in the beginning of his oration : here the heat of it is cooled, and consequently reason takes place, and he has time to reflect, that a man so disabled by calamities is not an equal match for a younger and less fatigued antagonist. This is an exact representation of human nature ; when our passions remit, the vehemence of our speech remits ; at first he speaks like a man in anger, here like the wise *Ulysses*.

It is observable that *Ulysses* all along maintains a decency and reverence towards the Gods, even while his anger seems to be master over his reason ; he gives *Eurytus* as an example of the just vengeance of Heaven, and shews himself in a very opposite light : he is so far from contending with the Gods, that he allows himself to be inferiour to some other Heroes : an instance of modesty.

v. 265. — — — — age well may fail,
When storms and hunger ———]

This passage appears to me to refer to the late storms and shipwreck, and the long abstinence *Ulysses* suffered in sailing from *Calypso* to the *Phæacian* Island ; for when *Nausicaa* found him, he was almost dead with hunger, as appears from the sixth of the *Odyssey*. *Dacier* is of a different opinion, and thinks it relates to his abstinence and shipwreck upon his leaving *Circe*, before he came to *Calypso*. This seems very improbable ; for *Ulysses* had lived seven years with that Goddess in great affluence, and consequently must be supposed to have recruited his loss of strength in so long a time, and with the particular care of a Goddess : besides *Alcinous* was acquainted with his late shipwreck, and his daughter *Nausicaa* was in some degree witness to it : is it not therefore more probable that he should refer to this latter incident, than speak of a



180 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

Abash'd, the numbers hear the God-like man,
'Till great *Alcinous* mildly thus began.

Well hast thou spoke, and well thy gen'rous
tongue

With decent pride refutes a publick wrong : 270
Warm are thy words, but warm without offence ;
Fear only fools, secure in men of sense :

Thy worth is known. Then hear our country's
claim,

And bear to heroes our heroick fame ;
In distant realms our glorious deeds display, 275
Repeat them frequent in the genial day ;

calamity that happened seven years past, to which they were
intirely strangers ?

Dacier likewise asserts that *Eustathius* is guilty of a mistake, in making κομιδὴν or *provision*, to signify the ship itself; but in reality he makes an evident distinction: Οὐ γὰρ διὰ τὸ μὴ κομιδὴν ἐν βρώμασιν ἔχειν ἰδαμάσθη Ὀδυσσεὺς τοῖς κύμασιν, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐθραύσθη κύμασιν ἡ κομιδὴν ἔχουσα ναῦς; “ *Ulysses* suffered not in the storm because he had no provisions to eat, but because the ship that bore the provisions was broken by the storm;” which shews a wide difference between the vessel and the provisions: so that the expression really implies that the vessel was broken, but *Eustathius* is far from affirming that κομιδὴν and ναῦς (except in such an improper sense) have the same signification.

ψ. 275. *In distant realms our glorious deeds display.*] From this extravagant preface, it might be imagined that *Alcinous* was King of a nation of Heroes: whereas when he comes to explain the excellence of his subjects, he has scarce any thing



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 181

When blest with ease thy woes and wand'rings end,
Teach them thy consort, bid thy sons attend ;
How lov'd of *Jove* he crown'd our fires with praise,
How we their offspring dignify our race. 280

Let other realms the deathful gauntlet wield,
Or boast the glories of th' athletick field ;
We in the course unrivall'd speed display,
Or thro' cærulean billows plough the way,
To dress, to dance, to sing our sole delight, 385
The feast or bath by day, and love by night :
Rise then ye skill'd in measures ; let him bear
Your fame to men that breathe a distant air :
And faithful say, to you the pow'rs belong
To race, to sail, to dance, to chant the song. 290

to boast of that is manly ; they spend an idle life in singing, dancing, and feasting. Thus the Poet all along writes consistently : we may know the *Phæacians* by their character, which is always to be voluptuous, or as *Horace* expresses it,

“ — — — — — *Alcinoique*

“ In cute curandâ plus æquo operata juvenus.”

And *Eustathius* rightly observes that the Poet does not teach that we ought to live such lives, but only relates historically what lives were led by the *Phæacians* ; he describes them as a contemptible people, and consequently proposes them as objects of our scorn not imitation.



182 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

But, herald, to the palace swift repair,
And the soft Lyre to grace our pastimes bear.

Swift at the word, obedient to the King
The herald flies the tuneful lyre to bring.
Up rose nine Seniors, chosen to survey 295
The future games, the judges of the day :
With instant care they mark a spacious round,
And level for the dance th' allotted ground ;
The herald bears the Lyre : intent to play,
The Bard advancing meditates the lay, 300
Skill'd in the dance, 'till youths, a blooming band,
Graccful before the heav'nly minstrel stand ;

§. 301. *Skill'd in the dance* ———] I beg leave to translate *Dacier's* Annotation upon this passage, and to offer a remark upon it. This description, says that lady, is remarkable, not because the dancers moved to the sound of the harp and the song ; for in this there is nothing extraordinary ; but in that they danced, if I may so express it, an History ; that is, by their gestures and movements they expressed what the musick of the harp and voice described, and the dance was a representation of what was the subject of the Poet's song. *Homer* only says they danced divinely, according to the obvious meaning of the words. I fancy *Madam Dacier* would have forborne her observation, if she had reflected upon the nature of the song to which the *Phæacians* danced : it was an intrigue between *Mars* and *Venus* ; and they being taken in some very odd postures, she must allow that these dancers represented some very odd gestures, (or movements as she expresses it) if they were now dancing an History, that is act-



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 183

Light-bounding from the earth, at once they
rise,

Their feet half-viewless quiver in the skies :

Ulysses gaz'd, astonish'd to survey, 305

The glancing splendours as their sandals play.

Meantime the Bard, alternate to the strings,

The loves of *Mars* and *Cytherea* sings ;

ing in their motions what was the subject of the song. But I submit to the judgment of the Ladies, and shall only add, that this is an instance how a critical eye can see some things in an author, that were never intended by him ; though to do her justice she borrowed the general remark from *Eustathius*.

The words *μαρμαρυγὰς θηῖτο ποδῶν* are very expressive, they represent the quick glancings of their feet in the dance, *Motus pedum coruscans* ; or

The glancing splendours as their sandals play.

ψ. 307. — — *the Bard alternate to the strings
The loves of Mars and Cytherea sings.*]

The Reader may be pleased to look back to the beginning of the book for a general vindication of this story. *Scaliger* in his *Poeticks* prefers the song of *Iopas* in *Virgil*, to this of *Demodocus* in *Homer* ; *Demodocus Deorum canit faditates, noster Iöpas res rege dignas*. *Monsieur Dacier* in his *Annotations upon Aristotle's Poeticks* refutes the objection. The song of *Demodocus*, says he, is as well adapted to the inclinations and relish of the *Phæacians*, as the song of *Iöpas* is to *Queen Dido*. It may indeed be questioned whether the subject of *Virgil's* song be well chosen, and whether the deepest points of philosophy were intirely proper to be sung to a Queen and her female attendants.



184 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

Now the stern God enamour'd with her charms,
Clasp'd the gay panting Goddess in his arms, 310

The various labours of the wand'ring Moon,
And whence proceed th' eclipses of the Sun,
Ta' original of men and beasts, and whence
The rains arise, and fires their warmth dispense, &c.

Dryden.

Nor is *Virgil* more reserved than *Homer*: in the fourth *Georgick* he introduces a Nymph, who in the Court of the Goddess *Cyrenè* with her Nymphs about her, sings this very song of *Demodocus*.

To these *Clymenè* the sweet theft declares
Of *Mars*; and *Vulcan's* unavailing cares;
And all the rapes of Gods, and every love
From ancient *Chaos* down to youthful *Jove*.

Dryden.

So that if either of the Poets are to be blamed, it is certainly *Virgil*: but neither of them, adds that Critick, are culpable: *Virgil* understood what a chaste Queen ought to hear before strangers, and what women might say when alone among themselves: thus to the Queen he sings a philosophical song, but the intrigues of *Mars* and *Venus* among nymphs when they were alone.

Plutarch vindicates this story of *Homer*: there is a way of teaching by mute actions, and those very fables that have given most offence, furnish us with useful contemplations: thus in the story of *Mars* and *Venus*, some have by an unnecessary violence endeavoured to reduce it into allegory: when *Venus* is in conjunction with the star called *Mars*, they have an adulterous influence, but time, or the sun, reveals it. But the Poet himself far better explains the meaning of his fable, for he teaches that light musick and wanton songs debauch the manners, and incline men to an unmanly way of living in luxury and wantonness.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 185

By bribes seduc'd : and how the Sun, whose eye
Views the broad heav'ns, disclos'd the lawless
joy.

Stung to the soul, indignant thro' the skies
To his black forge vindictive *Vulcan* flies ;
Arriv'd, his finewy arms incessant place 315
Th' eternal anvil on the massy base.

A wond'rous Net he labours, to betray
The wanton lovers, as entwin'd they lay,
Indissolubly strong ! Then instant bears
To his immortal dome the finish'd snares. 320
Above, below, around, with art dispread,
The sure inclosure folds the genial bed ;
Whose texture ev'n the search of Gods deceives,
Thin as the filmy threads the spider weaves.

In short, *Virgil* mentions this story, *Ovid* translates it, *Plutarch* commends it, and *Scaliger* censures it. I will add the judgment of a late Writer, Monsieur *Boileau*, concerning *Scaliger*, in his Notes upon *Longinus*. “ That proud scholar,
“ says he, intending to erect altars to *Virgil*, as he expresses
“ it, speaks of *Homer* too profanely ; but it is in a book
“ which he calls in part *Hypercritical*, to shew that he trans-
“ gressed the bounds of true Criticism : that piece was a dis-
“ honour to *Scaliger*, and he fell into such gross errors, that
“ he drew upon him the ridicule of all men of letters, and
“ even of his own son.”



186 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

Then, as withdrawing from the starry bow'rs, 325
 He feigns a journey to the *Lemnian* shores,
 His fav'rite Isle ! Observant *Mars* descries
 His wish'd recess, and to the Goddess flies ;
 He glows, he burns : the fair-hair'd Queen of love
 Descends smooth gliding from the Courts of
Jove, 330

Gay blooming in full charms : her hand he prest
 With eager joy, and with a sigh addrest.

Come my belov'd ! and taste the soft delights
 Come, to repose the genial bed invites :
 Thy absent spouse, neglectful of thy charms, 335
 Prefers his barb'rous *Sintians* to thy arms !

Then, nothing loath, th' enamour'd fair he led,
 And sunk transported on the conscious bed.

ψ. 336. *Prefers his barb'rous Sintians to thy arms.*] The *Sintians* were the inhabitants of *Lemnos*, by origin *Thracians* : *Homer* calls them barbarous of speech, because their language was a corruption of the *Greek*, *Asiatick*, and *Thracian*. But there is a concealed raillery in the expression, and *Mars* ridicules the ill taste of *Vulcan* for leaving so beautiful a Goddess to visit his rude and barbarous *Sintians*. The Poet calls *Lemnos* the favourite isle of *Vulcan* ; this alludes to the subterraneous fires frequent in that Island, and he is feigned to have his forge there, as the God of fire. This is likewise the reason why he is said to fall into the Island *Lemnos* when *Jupiter* threw him from Heaven. *Dacier*.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 187

Down rush'd the toils, inwrapping as they lay,
The careless lovers in their wanton play: 340

In vain they strive, th' intangling snares deny
(Inextricably firm) the pow'r to fly:

Warn'd by the God who sheds the golden day,
Stern *Vulcan* homeward treads the starry way:

Arriv'd, he sees, he grieves, with rage he burns; 345
Full horrible he roars, his voice all heav'n returns:

O *Jove*, he cry'd, oh all ye pow'rs above,
See the lewd dalliance of the Queen of Love!
Me, aukward me, she scorns; and yields her charms
To that fair Letcher, the strong God of arms. 350
If I am lame, that stain my natal hour
By fate impos'd; such me my parent bore:

348. *See the lewd dalliance of the Queen of Love.*] The original seems to be corrupted; were it to be translated according to the present editions, it must be, *See the ridiculous deeds of Venus*. I conceive, that few husbands who should take their spouses in such circumstances would have any great appetite to laugh; neither is such an interpretation consonant to the words immediately following *ἐκ ἐπιεικλᾶ*. It is therefore very probable that the verse was originally,

Δεῦθ' ἵνα ἔργ' ἀγέλαστα καὶ ἐκ ἐπιεικλᾶ ἴδῃσθε.

Come ye Gods, behold the sad and unsufferable deeds of Venus; and this agrees with the tenour of *Vulcan's* behaviour in this comedy, who has not the least disposition to be merry with his brother Deities.



188 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

Why was I born? See how the wanton lies!

O fight tormenting to an husband's eyes!

But yet I trust, this once ev'n *Mars* would fly 355

His fair-one's arms—he thinks her, once, too nigh.

But there remain, ye guilty, in my pow'r,

'Till *Jove* refunds his shameless daughter's dow'r.

†. 358. 'Till *Jove* refunds his shameless daughter's dow'r.] I doubt not but this was the usage of antiquity: it has been observed that the bridegroom made presents to the father of the bride, which were called *ἐνδοα*; and if she was afterwards false to his bed, this dower was restored by the father to the husband. Besides this restitution, there seems a pecuniary mulct to have been paid, as appears evident from what follows:

— — — — — the God of arms
Must pay the penalty for lawless charms.

Homer in this, as in many other places, seems to allude to the laws of *Athens*, where death was the punishment of adultery. *Pausanias* relates, that *Draco* the *Athenian* lawgiver granted impunity to any person that took revenge upon an adulterer. Such also was the institution of *Solon*; “If any one seize an adulterer, let him use him as he pleases;” *ἐὰν τις μοιχὸν λάβῃ, ὅτι ἂν βεβλήται χρῆσθαι*. And thus *Eratosthenes* answered a person who begged his life after he had injured his bed, *ὅκ ἐγὼ σε ἀποκτενῶ, ἀλλ' ὁ τῆς πόλεως νόμος*, “It is not I who slay thee, but the law of thy country.” But still it was in the power of the injured person to take a pecuniary mulct by way of atonement: for thus the same *Eratosthenes* speaks in *Lysias*, *ἠντιμόλεος καὶ ἐκέλευε μὴ αὐτὸν κτεῖναι, ἀλλ' ἀργύριον πρᾶξασθαι*, “He entreated me not to take his life, but exact a sum of money.” Nay, such penalties were allowed by way of commutation for greater crimes than adultery, as in the case of murder: *Iliad* ix.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 189

Too dear I priz'd a fair enchanting face :
Beauty unchaste is beauty in disgrace. 360

Meanwhile the Gods the dome of *Vulcan* throng,
Apollo comes, and *Neptune* comes along,
With these gay *Hermes* trod the starry plain ;
But modesty with-held the Goddess-train.

All heav'n beholds, imprison'd as they lie, 365
And unextinguish'd laughter shakes the sky.

Then mutual, thus they spoke : Behold on wrong
Swift vengeance waits ; and Art subdues the strong !
Dwells there a God on all th' *Olympian* brow .
More swift than *Mars*, and more than *Vulcan* slow ?

— — — — If a brother bleed,
On just atonement, we remit the deed :
A fire the slaughter of his son forgives ;
The Price of blood discharg'd, the murd'rer lives.

ψ. 367. — — — — Behold on wrong
Swift vengeance waits ———]

Plutarch in his dissertation upon reading the Poets, quotes this as an instance of *Homer's* judgment, in closing a ludicrous scene with decency and instruction. He artfully inserts a sentence by which he discovers his own judgment, and lets the reader into the moral of his fables ; by this conduct he makes even the representation of evil actions useful, by shewing the shame and detriment they draw upon those who are guilty of them.



190 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

Yet *Vulkan* conquers, and the God of arms 371
Must pay the penalty for lawless charms.

Thus serious they : but he who gilds the skies,
The gay *Apollo* thus to *Hermes* cries. 374

Woud'st thou enchain'd like *Mars*, oh *Hermes*, lie,
And bear the shame like *Mars*, to share the joy ?

O envy'd shame ! (the smiling youth rejoin'd,)
Add thrice the chains, and thrice more firmly bind ;
Gaze all ye Gods, and ev'ry Goddess gaze,
Yet eager would I bless the sweet disgrace. 380

Loud laugh the rest, ev'n *Neptune* laughs aloud,
Yet sues importunate to loose the God :
And free, he cries, oh *Vulkan* ! free from shame
Thy captives ; I ensure the penal claim. 384

ψ. 382. *Neptune sues to loose the God.*] It may be asked why *Neptune* in particular interests himself in the deliverance of *Mars*, rather than the other Gods ? *Dacier* confesses he can find no reason for it ; but *Eustathius* is of opinion, that *Homer* ascribes it to that God out of decency, and deference to his superiour Majesty and Eminence amongst the other Deities : it is suitable to the character of that most ancient, and consequently honourable God, to interrupt such an indecent Scene of mirth, which is not so becoming his personage, as those more youthful Deities *Apollo* and *Mercury*. Besides, it agrees well with *Neptune's* gravity to be the first who is first mindful of friendship ; so that what is here said of *Neptune* is not accidental, but spoken judiciously by the Poet in honour of that Deity.



Will *Neptune* (*Vulcan* then) the faithless trust?
 He suffers who gives surety for th' unjust:
 But say, if that lewd scandal of the sky
 To liberty restor'd, perfidious fly;
 Say, wilt thou bear the Mule? He instant cries,
 The Mule I bear, if *Mars* perfidious flies. 390
 To whom appeas'd: No more I urge delay;
 When *Neptune* sues, my part is to obey.

ψ. 386. *He suffers who gives surety for th' unjust.*] This verse is very obscure, and made still more obscure by the explanations of Criticks. Some think it implies, that it is wicked to be surety for a wicked person; and therefore *Neptune* should not give his promise for *Mars* thus taken in adultery. Some take it generally; suretyship is detrimental, and it is the lot of unhappy men to be sureties; the words then are to be construed in the following order, δειλαί ται ἐγγύαι, καὶ δειλῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐγγυάασθαι. *Sponsiones sunt infelices, & hominum est infelicium sponsiones dare.* Others understand it very differently, viz. to imply that the sureties of men of inferior condition, should be to men of inferior condition; then the sentence will bear this import: if *Mars*, says *Vulcan*, refuses to discharge the penalty, how shall I compel *Neptune* to pay it, who is so greatly my superior? And therefore adds by way of sentence, that the sponsor ought to be of the same station with the person to whom he become surety; or in *Latin*, *Simplicium hominum simplices esse debent sponsores.* I have followed *Plutarch*, who in his banquet of the seven wise men, explains it to signify that it is dangerous to be surety for a wicked person, according to the ancient sentence, ἐγγύα παρὰ δ' ἄτα. *Loss follows suretyship.* Agreeably to the opinion of a much wiser person, *He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it; and he that bateth suretyship is sure.* Prov. xi. 15.



192 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

Then to the snares his force the God applies ;
 They burst ; and *Mars* to *Thrace* indignant flies :
 To the soft *Cyprian* shores the Goddess moves, 395
 To visit *Paphos* and her blooming groves,
 Where to the pow'r an hundred altars rise,
 And breathing odours scent the balmy skies,
 Conceal'd she bathes in consecrated bow'rs,
 The Graces unguents shed, ambrosial show'rs, 400
 Unguents that charm the Gods ! she last assumes
 Her wond'rous robes ; and full the Goddess blooms.

Thus sung the Bard : *Ulysses* hears with joy,
 And loud applauses rend the vaulted sky.

Then to the sports his sons the King com-
 mands, 405
 Each blooming youth before the monarch stands,

v. 394. — — — *Mars to Thrace indignant flies :*
To the soft Cyprian shores the Goddess moves.]

There is a reason for this particularity : the *Thracians* were a warlike people : the Poet therefore sends the God of War thither : and the people of *Cyprus* being effeminate, and addicted to love and pleasures, he feigns the recess of the Goddess of Love to have been in that Island. It is further observable, that he barely mentions the retreat of *Mars*, but dwells more largely upon the story of *Venus*. The reason is, the *Phœnicians* had no delight in the God of War, but the soft description of *Venus* better suited with their inclinations. *Englabius.*



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 193

In dance unmatch'd ! A wond'rous ball is
brought,

(The work of *Polybus*, divinely wrought)

This youth with strength enormous bids it fly,
And bending backward whirls it to the sky ; 410

His brother springing with an active bound,

At distance intercepts it from the ground :

The ball dismiss'd, in dance they skim the strand,

Turn and return, and scarce imprint the sand.

Th' assembly gazes with astonish'd eyes, 415

And sends in shouts applauses to the skies.

Then thus *Ulysses* : Happy King, whose name
The brightest shines in all the rolls of fame :

ψ. 410. *And bending backward whirls it to the sky.*] This is a literal translation of ἰδνωθεὶς ὀπίσω ; and it gives us a lively image of a person in the act of throwing towards the skies. *Eustathius* is most learnedly trifling about this exercise of the ball, which was called οὐρανία, or *aerial* ; it was a kind of dance, and while they sprung from the ground to catch the ball, they played with their feet in the air after the manner of dancers. He reckons up several other exercises at the ball, ἀπόρριξις, φαινίδα, ἐπίκυρθε, and δεμαῦστρος ; and explains them all largely. *Homer* seems to oppose this aerial dance to the common one, ποτὶ χθονί, or *on the ground*. which appears to be added to make an evident distinction between the sports ; otherwise it is unnecessary ; and to dance upon the ground is implied in ὡρχίσσασθαι, for how should a dance be performed but upon the ground.



194 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

In subjects happy ! with surprise I gaze ; 419

Thy praise was just ; their skill transcends thy praise.

Pleas'd with his people's fame the Monarch hears,
And thus benevolent accosts the Peers.

Since Wisdom's sacred guidance he pursues,

Give to the stranger-guest a stranger's dues :

Twelve Princes in our realm dominion share, 425

O'er whom supreme, imperial pow'r I bear :

Bring gold, a pledge of love ; a talent bring,

A vest, a robe ; and imitate your King :

Be swift to give ; that he this night may share

The social feast of joy, with joy sincere. 430

And thou, *Euryalus*, redeem thy wrong :

A gen'rous heart repairs a slanderous tongue.

ψ. 420. *Thy praise was just* ———] The original says, You promised that your subjects were excellent dancers, *ἐπαίλησας*, that is, *threatened* : *Minans* is used in the same sense by the *Latins*, as *Dacier* observes ; thus *Horace*,

“ Multa & præclara minantem.”

Eustathius remarks, that the address of *Ulysses* is very artful, he calls it a seasonable flattery : in reality to excel in dancing, is but to excel in trifles, but in the opinion of *Alcinous* it was a most noble qualification : *Ulysses* therefore pleases his vanity by adapting his praise to his notions ; and that which would have been an affront in some nations, is esteemed as the highest compliment by *Alcinous*.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 195

Th' assenting Peers, obedient to the King,
In haste their heralds send the gifts to bring.
Then thus *Euryalus* : O Prince, whose sway 435
Rules this blest realm, repentant I obey !
Be his this sword, whose blade of brass displays
A ruddy gleam ; whose hilt, a silver blaze ;
Whose ivory sheath inwrought with curious pride,
Adds graceful terour to the wearer's side. 440

He said, and to his hand the sword consign'd ;
And if, he cry'd, my words affect thy mind,
Far from thy mind those words, ye whirlwinds bear,
And scatter them, ye storms, in empty air ! 444
Crown, oh ye heav'ns, with joy his peaceful hours,
And grant him to his spouse and native shores !

And blest be thou, my friend, *Ulysses* cries,
Crown him with ev'ry joy, ye fav'ring skies ;
To thy calm hours continu'd peace afford,
And never, never may'st thou want this sword ! 450

ψ. 450. *And never, never may'st thou want this sword.*] It can scarce be imagined how greatly this beautiful passage is misrepresented by *Eustathius*. He would have it to imply, *May I never want this sword*, taking τοι adverbially : the presents of enemies were reckoned fatal, *Ulysses* therefore to avert the omen, prays that he may never have occasion to have recourse



196 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

He said, and o'er his shoulder flung the blade.
 Now o'er the earth ascends the evening shade :
 The precious gifts th' illustrious heralds bear,
 And to the court th' embody'd Peers repair.
 Before the Queen *Alcinous'* sons unfold 555
 The vests, the robes, and heaps of shining gold ;
 Then to the radiant thrones they move in state :
 Aloft, the King in pomp Imperial sat.

Thence to the Queen. O partner of our reign,
 O sole belov'd ! command thy menial train 460
 A polish'd chest and stately robes to bear,
 And healing waters for the bath prepare :
 That bath'd, our guest may bid his sorrows
 cease,

Hear the sweet song, and taste the feast in peace.
 A bowl that flames with gold, of wond'rous frame,
 Ourself we give, memorial of our name : 465

to this sword of *Euryalus*, but keep it amongst his treasures as a testimony of this reconciliation. This appears to be a very forced interpretation, and disagreeable to the general import of the rest of the sentence ; he addresses to *Euryalus*, to whom then can this compliment be naturally paid but to *Euryalus* ? *Thou hast given me a sword*, says he, *may thy days be so peaceable as never to want it !* This is an instance of the polite address, and the forgiving temper, of *Ulysses*.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 197

To raise in off'rings to almighty *Jove*,
And every God that tread the courts above.

Instant the Queen, observant of the King,
Commands her train a spacious vase to bring, 470
The spacious vase with ample streams suffice,
Heap high the wood, and bid the flames arise.
The flames climb round it with a fierce embrace,
The fuming waters bubble o'er the blaze.
Herself the chest prepares : in order roll'd 475
The robes, the vests are rang'd, and heaps of gold :
And adding a rich dress inwrought with art,
A gift expressive of her bounteous heart,
Thus spoke to *Ithacus* : To guard with bands
Insolvable these gifts, thy care demands : 480
Left, in thy slumbers on the wat'ry main,
The hand of Rapine make our bounty vain.

Then bending with full force, around he roll'd
A labyrinth of bands in fold on fold,
Clos'd with *Circæan* art. A train attends 485
Around the bath : the bath the King ascends :

ψ. 485. *Clos'd with Circæan art.* —] Such passages as these have more of nature than art, and are too narrative, and different from modern ways of speaking, to be capable



198 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

(Untasted joy, since that disastrous hour,
 He sail'd ill-fated from *Calypso's* bow'r)
 Where, happy as the Gods that range the sky,
 He feasted ev'ry sense, with ev'ry joy. 490
 He bathes; the damsels with officious toil,
 Shed sweets, shed unguents, in a show'r of oil:
 Then o'er his limbs a gorgeous robe he spreads,
 And to the feast magnificently treads. 494
 Full where the dome its shining valves expands,
Nausicaa blooming as a Goddess stands,

of much ornament in Poetry. *Eustathius* observes that keys were not in use in these ages, but were afterwards invented by the *Lacedæmonians*; but they used to bind their carriages with intricate knots. Thus the *Gordian* knot was famous in antiquity. And this knot of *Ulysses* became a proverb, to express any insolvable difficulty, ὁ τῷ Ὀδυσσεύει δεσμός: this is the reason why he is said to have learned it from *Circe*; it was of great esteem amongst the Ancients, and not being capable to be untied by human art, the invention of it is ascribed, not to a man, but to a Goddess.

A Poet would now appear ridiculous if he should introduce a Goddess only to teach a Hero such an Art, as to tie a knot with intricacy: but we must not judge of what has been, from what now is; customs and arts are never at a stay, and consequently the ideas of customs and arts are as changeable as those arts and customs: this knot in all probability was in as high estimation formerly, as the finest watch-work or machines are at this day; and were a person famed for an uncommon skill in such works, it would be no absurdity in the language of poetry, to ascribe his knowledge in them to the assistance of a Deity.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 199

With wond'ring eyes the hero she survey'd,
And graceful thus began the royal maid.

Hail God-like stranger ! and when heav'n re-
stores

To thy fond wish thy long-expected shores, 500
This ever grateful in remembrance bear,
To me thou ow'st, to me, the vital air.

O royal maid, *Ulysses* straight returns,
Whose worth the splendours of thy race adorns,
So may dread *Jove* (whose arm in vengeance
forms 505

The writhen bolt, and blackens heav'n with
storms,)

Restore me safe, thro' weary wand'rings toft,
To my dear country's ever pleasing coast,
As while the spirit in this bosom glows,
To thee, my Goddess, I address my vows; 510

ψ. 510. *To thee, my Goddess, I address my vows.*] This may seem an extravagant compliment, especially in the mouth of the wife *Ulysses*, and rather profane than polite. *Dacier* commends it as the highest piece of address and gallantry; but perhaps it may want explication to reconcile it to decency. *Ulysses* only speaks comparatively, and with relation to that one action of her saving his life: "As therefore, says he, I owe
" my thanks to the Heavens for giving me life originally,



200 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

My life, thy gift I boast! He said, and fat,

Fast by *Alcinous* on a throne of state.

Now each partakes the feast, the wine prepares,

Portions the food, and each his portion shares.

The Bard an herald guides : the gazing throng 515

Pay low obeisance as he moves along :

Beneath a sculptur'd arch he sits enthron'd,

The Peers encircling form an awful round.

Then from the chine, *Ulysses* carves with art

Delicious food, an honorary part ;

520

“ so I ought to pay my thanks to thee for preserving it ;
 “ thou hast been to me as a Deity. To preserve a life, is
 “ in one sense to give it.” If this appears not to soften the
 expression sufficiently, it may be ascribed to an overflow of
 gratitude in the generous disposition of *Ulysses* ; he is so
 touched with the memory of her benevolence and protection,
 that his soul labours for an expression great enough to repre-
 sent it, and no wonder if in this struggle of thought, his
 words fly out into an excessive but laudable boldness.

*. 519. — *From the chine Ulysses carves with art.*] Were
 this literally to be translated, it would be that *Ulysses* cut a
 piece from the chine of the white-toothed boar, round which
 there was much fat. This looks like Burlesque to a person
 unacquainted with the usages of Antiquity : but it was the
 highest honour that could be paid to *Demodocus*. The great-
 est Heroes in the *Iliad* are thus rewarded after victory, and
 it was esteemed an equivalent for all dangers. So that what
Ulysses here offers to the Poet, is offered out of a particular
 regard and honour to his Poetry.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 201

This, let the Master of the Lyre receive,
 A pledge of love ! 'tis all a wretch can give.
 Lives there a Man beneath the spacious skies,
 Who sacred honours to the Bard denies ?
 The Muse the Bard inspires, exalts his Mind ; 525
 The Muse indulgent loves th' harmonious kind :
 The herald to his hand the charge conveys,
 Not fond of flatt'ry, nor unpleas'd with praise.
 When now the rage of hunger was allay'd,
 Thus to the Lyrist wife *Ulysses* said, 530
 O more than man ! thy soul the Muse inspires,
 Or *Phœbus* animates with all his fires :

531. ——— *Thy soul the Muse inspires,*
 Or Phœbus animates with all his fires.]

Ulysses here ascribes the songs of *Demodocus* to immediate inspiration ; and *Apollo* is made the patron of the Poets, as *Eustathius* observes, because he is the God of Prophecy. He adds, that *Homer* here again represents himself in the person of *Demodocus* : it is he who wrote the war of *Troy* with as much faithfulness, as if he had been present at it ; it is he who had little or no assistance from former relations of that story, and consequently receives it from *Apollo* and the Muses. This is a secret but artful insinuation that we are not to look upon the *Iliad* as all fiction and fable, but in general as a real history, related with as much certainty as if the Poet had been present at those memorable actions.

Plutarch in his chapter of reading Poems admires the conduct of *Homer* with relation to *Ulysses* : he diverts *Demodocus* from idle Fables, and gives him a noble theme, the destruction



202 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

For who by *Phæbus* uninform'd, could know
 The woe of *Greece*, and sing so well the woe?
 Just to the tale, as present at the fray, 535
 Or taught the labours of the dreadful day!
 The song recalls past horrors to my eyes,
 And bids proud *Ilion* from her ashes rise.
 Once more harmonious strike the sounding string,
 Th' *Epæan* fabrick, fram'd by *Pallas*, sing: 540
 How stern *Ulysses*, furious to destroy,
 With latent heroes sack'd imperial *Troy*.
 If faithful thou record the tale of fame,
 The God himself inspires thy breast with flame:
 And mine shall be the task, henceforth to raise
 In ev'ry land, thy monument of praise. 546

Full of the God he rais'd his lofty strain,
 How the *Greeks* rush'd tumultuous to the main:
 How blazing tents illumin'd half the skies,
 While from the shores the winged navy flies: 550

of *Troy*. Such subjects suit well with the sage character of *Ulysses*. It is for the same reason that he here passes over in silence the amour of *Mars* and *Venus*, and commends the song at the beginning of this book, concerning the contention of the worthies before *Troy*: an instruction, what songs a wise man ought to hear, and that Poets should recite nothing but what may be heard by a wise man.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 203

How ev'n in *Ilion's* walls, in deathful bands,
Came the stern *Greeks* by *Troy's* assisting hands :
All *Troy* up-heav'd the steed ; of diff'ring mind,
Various the *Trojans* counsell'd ; part consign'd

§. 554. *Various the Trojans counsell'd* —] It is observable that the Poet gives us only the heads of this song, and though he had an opportunity to expatiate and introduce a variety of noble Images, by painting the fall of *Troy*, yet this being foreign to his story, he judiciously restrains his fancy, and passes on to the more immediate Actions of the *Odyssey*. *Virgil*, lib. ii. of his *Æneis*, has translated these verses :

“ Scinditur incertum studia in contraria vulgus :
“ At Capys, & quorum melior sententia menti,
“ Aut Pelago Danaum insidias suspectaque dona
“ Præcipitare jubent, subjectisque urere flammis ;
“ Aut terebrare cavas uteri & tentare latebras.”

Scaliger prefers these before those of *Homer*, and says that *Homer* trifles in describing so particularly the divisions of the *Trojan* counsels : that *Virgil* chuses to burn the horse, rather than describe it as thrown from the rocks : for how should the *Trojans* raise it thither ? Such objections are scarce worthy of a serious answer, for it is no difficulty to imagine that the same men who heaved this machine into *Troy*, should be able to raise it upon a rock : and as for the former objection, *Virgil* recites almost the same divisions in counsel as *Homer*, nay borrows them, with little variation.

Aristotle observes the great art of *Homer*, in naturally bringing about the discovery of *Ulysses* to *Alcinous* by this song. He calls this a Remembrance, that is, when a present object stirs up a past image in the memory, as a picture recalls the figure of an absent friend : thus *Ulysses* hearing *Demodocus* sing to the harp his former hardships, breaks out into tears, and these tears bring about his discovery.



204 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

The monster to the sword, part sentence gave 555
 To plunge it headlong in the whelming wave ;
 Th' unwise award to lodge it in the tow'rs,
 An off'ring sacred to th' immortal pow'rs :
 Th' unwise prevail, they lodge it in the walls,
 And by the Gods decree proud *Ilion* falls ; 560
 Destruction enters in the treach'rous wood,
 And vengeful slaughter, fierce for human blood.

He sung the *Greeks* stern-issuing from the steed,
 How *Ilion* burns, how all her fathers bleed :
 How to thy dome, *Deiphobus* ! ascends 565
 The *Spartan* King ; how *Ithacus* attends,
 (Horrid as *Mars*) and how with dire alarms
 He fights, subdues : for *Pallas* strings his arms,

Thus while he sung, *Ulysses*' griefs renew,
 Tears bathe his cheeks, and tears the ground be-
 dew : 570

As some fond matron views in mortal fight
 Her husband falling in his country's right :

✱. 571. *As some fond matron —.*] This is undoubtedly a very moving and beautiful comparison ; but it may be asked if it be proper to compare so great a Hero as *Ulysses* to a woman, the weakness of whose sex justifies her tears ? Besides



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 205

Frantick thro' clashing swords she runs, she flies,
 As ghastly pale he groans, and faints, and dies;
 Close to his breast she grovels on the ground, 575
 And bathes with floods of tears the gaping wound;
 She cries, she shrieks; the fierce insulting foe
 Relentless mocks her violence of woe:
 To chains condemn'd, as wildly she deplores;
 A widow, and a slave on foreign shores. 580

So from the sluices of *Ulysses'* eyes
 Fast fell the tears, and sighs succeeded sighs:

she appears to have a sufficient cause for her sorrows, as being under the greatest calamities; but why should *Ulysses* weep? Nothing but his valour and success is recorded, and why should this be an occasion of sorrow? *Eustathius* replies, that they who think that *Ulysses* is compared to the matron, mistake the point of the comparison: whereas the tears alone of *Ulysses* are intended to be compared to the tears of the matron. It is the sorrow of the two persons, not the persons themselves, that is represented in the comparison. But there appears no sufficient cause for the tears of *Ulysses*; this objection would not have been made, if the subject of the song had been considered; it sets before his eyes all the calamities of a long war, all the scenes of slaughter of friends and enemies that he had beheld in it: it is also to be remembered, that we have only the abridgment of the song, and yet we see spectacles of horror, blood, and commiseration. Tears discover a tender, not an abject spirit. *Achilles* is not less a Hero for weeping over the ashes of *Patroclus*, nor *Ulysses* for lamenting the calamities and deaths of thousands of his friends.



206 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII,

Conceal'd he griev'd : the King observ'd alone
The silent tear, and heard the secret groan :
Then to the Bard aloud : O cease to sing, 585
Dumb be thy voice, and mute the tuneful string :
To ev'ry note his tears responsive flow, /
And his great heart heaves with tumultuous
woe ;

Thy lay too deeply moves : then cease the lay,
And o'er the banquet ev'ry heart be gay : · 590
This social right demands : for him the sails
Floating in air, invite th' impelling gales :
His are the gifts of love : the wise and good
Receive the stranger as a brother's blood.

But, friend, discover faithful what I crave, 595
Artful concealment ill becomes the brave :
Say what thy birth, and what the name you
bore,

Impos'd by parents in the natal hour ?
(For from the natal hour distinctive names,
One common right, the great and lowly claims :)
Say from what city, from what regions tost, 601
And what inhabitants those regions boast ?



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 207

So shalt thou instant reach the realm assign'd,
In wond'rous ships self-mov'd, instinct with
mind;

No helm secures their course, no pilot guides;
Like man intelligent, they plough the tides, 606
Conscious of every coast, and every bay,
That lies beneath the sun's all-seeing ray;

*. 604. *In wond'rous ships self-mov'd, instinct with mind.*] There is not a passage that more outrages all the rules of credibility than the description of these ships of *Alcinous*. The Poet inserts these wonders only to shew the great dexterity of the *Phæacians* in navigation; and indeed it was necessary to be very full in the description of their skill, who were to convey *Ulysses* home in despite of the very God of the Ocean. It is for the same reason that they are described as sailing almost invisibly, to escape the notice of that God. Antiquity animated every thing in Poetry; thus *Argo* is said to have had a mast made of *Dodonæan* oak, endued with the faculty of speech. But this is defending one absurdity, by instancing in a fable equally absurd; all that can be said in Defence of it is, that such extravagant fables were believed, at least by the vulgar, in former ages; and consequently might be introduced without blame in Poetry; if so, by whom could a boast of this nature be better made, than by a vain *Phæacian*? Besides these extravagancies let *Ulysses* into the humour of the *Phæacians*, and in the following books he adapts his story to it, and returns fable for fable. It must likewise certainly be a great encouragement to *Ulysses* to find himself in such hands as could so easily restore him to his country: for it was natural to conclude, that though *Alcinous* was guilty of great amplification, yet that his subjects were very expert navigators.



208 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

Tho' clouds and darkness veil th' encumber'd sky;
 Fearless thro' darkness and thro' clouds they
 fly : 610

Tho' tempests rage, tho' rolls the swelling main;
 The seas may roll, the tempests rage in vain;
 Ev'n the stern God that o'er the waves presides,
 Safe as they pass, and safe repass the tides,
 With fury burns ; while careless they convey 615
 Promiscuous every guest to every bay.

These ears have heard my royal fire disclose
 A dreadful story big with future woes,
 How *Neptune* rag'd, and how, by his command,
 Firm rooted in a surge a ship should stand 620

†: 619. — — — — — *How, by his command,
 Firm rooted in the surge a ship should stand.]*

The Ancients, as *Eustathius* observes, mark these verses with an Obelisk and Asterism. The Obelisk shewed that they judged what relates to the oracle was misplaced, the Asterism denoted that they thought the verses very beautiful. For they thought it not probable that *Alcinous* would have called to memory this prediction and the menace of *Neptune*, and yet persisted to conduct to his own country the enemy of that Deity : whereas if this oracle be supposed to be forgotten by *Alcinous*, (as it will, if these verses be taken away) then there will be an appearance of truth, that he who was a friend to all strangers, should be persuaded to land so great and worthy a Hero as *Ulysses* in his own dominions, and therefore they reject them to the 13th of the *Odyssey*. But, as *Eustathius* observes, *Alcinous* immediately subjoins,



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 209

A monument of wrath : how mound on mound
Should bury these proud tow'rs beneath the ground.

But this the Gods may frustrate or fulfill,
As suits the purpose of th' eternal will.

And therefore the verses may be very proper in this book, for *Alcinous* believes that the Gods might be prevailed upon not to fulfil this denunciation. It has been likewise remarked that the conduct of *Alcinous* is very justifiable: the *Phæacians* had been warned by an oracle, that an evil threatened them for the care they should shew to a stranger: yet they forbear not to perform an act of piety to *Ulysses*, being persuaded that men ought to do their duty, and trust the issue to the goodness of the Gods. This will seem to be more probable, if we remember *Alcinous* is ignorant that *Ulysses* is the person intended by the prediction, so that he is not guilty of a voluntary opposition to the Gods, but really acts with piety in assisting his guest, and only complies with the common laws of hospitality.

It is but a conjecture, yet it is not without probability, that there was a rock which looked like a vessel, in the entrance of the haven of the *Phæacians*, the fable may be built upon this foundation, and because it was environed by the ocean, the transformation might be ascribed to the God of it.

✱. 621. — — — — — *How mound on mound*

Should bury these proud tow'rs beneath the ground.]

The Greek word is ἀμφικαλύψω, which does not necessarily imply that the city should be buried actually, but that a mountain should surround it, or cover it round; and in the thirteenth book we find that when the ship was transformed into a rock, the city continues out of danger. *Eustathius* is fully of opinion, that the city was threatened to be overwhelmed by a mountain; the Poet, says he, invents this fiction to prevent posterity from searching after this Isle of the *Phæacians*, and to preserve his story from detection of falsification; after the same manner as he introduces *Neptune* and the rivers of



210 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK VIII.

But this the Gods may frustrate or fulfill,
As suits the purpose of th' eternal will. 624

But say thro' what waste regions hast thou stray'd,
What customs noted, and what coasts survey'd?
Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms,
Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms?
Say why the fate of *Troy* awak'd thy cares,
Why heav'd thy bosom, and why flow'd thy
tears? 630

Just are the ways of heav'n: from heav'n proceed
The woes of man; heav'n doom'd the *Greeks* to
bleed,

Troy, bearing away the wall which the *Greeks* had rais'd as a fortification before their navy. But *Dacier* in the omissions which she inserts at the end of the second volume of her *Odyssey*, is of a contrary opinion, for the mountain is not said to cover the city, but to threaten to cover it: as appears from the thirteenth book of the *Odyssey*, where *Alcinous* commands a sacrifice to the Gods to avert the execution of this denunciation.

But the difference in reality is small, the city is equally threatened to be buried, as the vessel to be transformed; and therefore *Alcinous* might pronounce the same fate to both, since both were threatened equally by the prediction: it was indeed impossible for him to speak after any other manner, for he only repeats the words of the oracle, and cannot foresee that the sacrifice of the *Phæacians* would appease the anger of *Neptune*.



BOOK VIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 211

A theme of future Song ! Say then if slain
Some dear-lov'd brother press'd the *Phrygian* plain ?
Or bled some friend, who bore a brother's part, 635
And claim'd by merit, not by blood, the heart ?

ψ. 635. *Or bled some friend, who bore a brother's part,
And claim'd by merit, not by blood, the heart ?*]

This excellent sentence of *Homer* at once guides us in the choice, and instructs us in the regard, that is to be paid to the person of a Friend. If it be lawful to judge of a man from his writings, *Homer* had a soul susceptible of real friendship, and was a lover of sincerity. It would be endless to take notice of every casual instruction inserted in the *Odyssey* ; but such sentences shew *Homer* to have been a man of an amiable character as well as excellent in Poetry : the great abhorrence he had of Lies cannot be more strongly express'd than in those two passages of the ninth *Iliad*, and in the fourteenth *Odyssey* : in the first of which he makes the man of the greatest soul, *Achilles*, bear testimony to his aversion of them ; and in the latter declares, that “ the poorest man, though
“ compelled by the utmost necessity, ought not to stoop to
“ such a practice.” In this place he shews that worth creates a kind of relation, and that we are to look upon a worthy friend, as a brother.

This book takes up the whole thirty-third day, and part of the evening : for the council opens in the morning, and at sun-setting the *Phæacians* return to the palace from the games ; after which *Ulysses* bathes and sups, and spends some time of the evening in discoursing, and hearing the songs of *Demodocus*. Then *Alcinous* requests him to relate his own story, which he begins in the next book, and continues it through the four subsequent books of the *Odyssey*.



THE
NINTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.





The A R G U M E N T.

The adventures of the *Cicons*, *Lotophagi*, and *Cyclops*.

ULYSSES begins the relation of his adventures ; how after the destruction of Troy, he with his companions made an incursion on the *Cicons*, by whom they were repulsed ; and meeting with a storm, were driven to the coast of the *Lotophagi*. From thence they sailed to the land of the *Cyclops*, whose manners and situation are particularly characterised. The Giant *Polyphemus* and his cave described ; the usage *Ulysses* and his companions met with there ; and lastly, the method and artifice by which he escaped.



THE
* N I N T H B O O K
O F T H E
O D Y S S E Y.

THEN thus *Ulysses*. Thou, whom first in
fway,

As first in virtue, these thy realms obey ;
How sweet the products of a peaceful reign !
The heav'n-taught Poet, and enchanting strain ;

* As we are now come to the Episodical part of the *Odyssey*, it may be thought necessary to speak something of the nature of Episodes.

As the action of the Epick is always one, entire, and great Action ; so the most trivial Episodes must be so interwoven with it, as to be necessary parts, or convenient, as Mr. *Dryden* observes, to carry on the main design ; either so necessary,



216 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book ix.

The well-fill'd palace, the perpetual feast, 5
A land rejoicing, and a people blest !

as without them the Poem must be imperfect, or so convenient, that no others can be imagined more suitable to the place in which they stand : there is nothing to be left void in a firm building, even the cavities ought not to be filled up with rubbish destructive to the strength of it, but with materials of the same kind, though of less pieces, and fitted to the main fabrick.

Aristotle tells us, that what is comprehended in the first platform of the fable is proper, the rest is Episode : let us examine the *Odyssey* by this rule : the ground-work of the Poem is, a Prince absent from his country several years, *Neptune* hinders his return, yet at last he breaks through all obstacles, and returns, where he finds great disorders, the Authors of which he punishes, and restores peace to his Kingdoms. This is all that is essential to the model ; this the Poet is not at liberty to change ; this is so necessary, that any alteration destroys the design, spoils the fable, and makes another Poem of it. But Episodes are changeable ; for instance, though it was necessary that *Ulysses* being absent should spend several years with foreign Princes, yet it was not necessary that one of these Princes should be *Antiphates*, another *Alcinous*, or that *Circe* or *Calypso* should be the persons who entertained him : it was in the Poet's choice to have changed these persons and states, without changing his design or fable. Thus though these adventures or Episodes become parts of the subject after they are chosen, yet they are not originally essential to the subject. But in what sense then are they necessary ? The reply is, Since the absence of *Ulysses* was absolutely necessary, it follows that not being at home, he must be in some other country ; and therefore though the Poet was at liberty to make use of none of these particular adventures, yet it was not in his choice to make use of none at all ; if these had been omitted, he must have substituted others, or else he would have omitted part of the matter contained in his model,



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 217

How goodly seems it, ever to employ
Man's social days in union and in joy ;

viz. the adventures of a person long absent from his country ; and the Poem would have been defective. So that Episodes are not actions, but parts of an action. It is in Poetry, as *Aristotle* observes, as in Painting ; a Painter puts many actions into one piece, but they all conspire to form one entire and perfect Action : a Poet likewise uses many Episodes, but all those Episodes taken separately finish nothing, they are but imperfect members, which altogether make one and the same action, like the parts of a human body, they all conspire to constitute the whole man.

In a word, the Episodes of *Homer* are complete Episodes ; they are proper to the subject, because they are drawn from the ground of the fable ; they are so joined to the principal action, that one is the necessary consequence of the other, either truly or probably : and lastly, they are imperfect members which do not make a complete and finished body ; for an Episode that makes a complete action, cannot be part of a principal action ; as is essential to all Episodes.

An Episode may then be defined, “ A necessary part of an “ action, extended by probable circumstances.” They are part of an action, for they are not added to the principal action, but only dilate and amplify that principal action : thus the Poet to shew the sufferings of *Ulysses* brings in the several Episodes of *Polyphemus*, *Scylla*, the *Syrens*, &c. But why should the words, “ extended by probable circumstances,” enter the definition ? Because the sufferings of *Ulysses* are proposed in the model of the Fable in general only, but by relating the circumstances, the manner how he suffered is discovered ; and this connects it with the principal action, and shews very evidently the necessary relation the Episode bears to the main design of the *Odyssey*. What I have said, I hope, plainly discovers the difference between the Episodick and principal action, as well as the nature of Episodes. See *Bossu* more largely upon this subject.



218 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

The plenteous board high-heap'd with cates divine,
And o'er the foaming bowl the laughing wine! 10

✧. 3. *How sweet the products of a peaceful reign, &c.]* This passage has given great joy to the Criticks, as it has afforded them the ill-natured pleasure of railing, and the satisfaction of believing they have found a fault in a good Writer. It is fitter, say they, for the mouth of *Epicurus* than for the sage *Ulysses*, to extol the pleasures of feasting and drinking in this manner; he whom the Poet proposes as the standard of human Wisdom, says *Rapin*, suffers himself to be made drunk by the *Phæacians*. But it may rather be imagined, that the Critick was not very sober when he made the reflection; for there is not the least appearance of a reason for that imputation. *Plato* indeed in his third book *de Repub.* writes, that what *Ulysses* here speaks is no very proper example of temperance; but every body knows that *Plato* with respect to *Homer*, wrote with great partiality. *Athenæus* in his twelfth book gives us the following interpretation. *Ulysses* accommodates his discourse to the present occasion; he in appearance approves of the voluptuous lives of the *Phæacians*, and having heard *Alcinous* before say, that feasting and singing, &c. was their supreme delight; he by a seasonable flattery seems to comply with their inclinations: it being the most proper method to attain his desires of being conveyed to his own Country. He compares *Ulysses* to the *Polypus*, which is fabled to assume the colour of every rock to which he approaches: thus *Sophocles*,

Νόει πρὸς ἀνδρὶ σῶμα Πελύπες, ἔπως
Πέτρα τράπισθαι γνησίῃς φρενὶ μάλα.

That is, “ In your accesses to mankind observe the *Polypus*,
“ and adapt yourself to the humour of the person to whom
“ you apply.” *Eustathius* observes that this passage has been condemned, but he defends it after the very same way with *Athenæus*.

It is not impossible but that there may be some compliance with the nature and manners of the *Phæacians*, especially be-



Amid these joys, why seeks thy mind to know
Th' unhappy series of a wand'rer's woe ;

cause *Ulysses* is always described as an artful man, not without some mixture of dissimulation : but it is no difficult matter to take the passage literally, and give it an irreproachable sense. *Ulysses* had gone through innumerable calamities, he had lived to see a great part of *Europe* and *Asia* laid desolate by a bloody war ; and after so many troubles, he arrives among a nation that was unacquainted with all the miseries of war, where all the people were happy, and passed their lives with ease and pleasures : this calm life fills him with admiration, and he artfully praises what he found praise-worthy in it ; namely, the entertainments and musick, and passes over the gallantries of the people, as *Dacier* observes, without any mention. *Maximus Tyrius* fully vindicates *Homer*. It is my opinion, says that Author, that the Poet, by representing these guests in the midst of their entertainments, delighted with the song and musick, intended to recommend a more noble pleasure than eating and drinking, such a pleasure as a wise man may imitate, by approving the better part, and rejecting the worse, and chusing to please the ear rather than the belly. 12 *Dissert.*

If we understand the passage otherwise, the meaning may be this. I am persuaded, says *Ulysses*, that the most agreeable end which a King can propose, is to see a whole nation in universal joy, when musick and feasting are in every house, when plenty is on every table, and wines to entertain every guest : this to me appears a state of the greatest felicity.

In this sense *Ulysses* pays *Alcinous* a very agreeable compliment ; as it is certainly the most glorious aim of a King to make his subjects happy, and diffuse an universal joy through his dominions : he must be a rigid Censor indeed who blames such pleasures as these, which have nothing contrary in them to Virtue and strict Morality ; especially as they here bear a beautiful opposition to all the horrors which *Ulysses* had seen in the wars of *Troy*, and shew *Phæacia* as happy as *Troy* was miserable. I will only add, that this agrees with the orien-



Remembrance sad, whose image to review,

Alas ! must open all my wounds anew ?

And oh, what first, what last shall I relate, 15

Of woes unnumber'd sent by Heav'n and Fate ?

Know first the man (tho' now a wretch distressed)

Who hopes thee, Monarch, for his future guest.

Behold *Ulysses* ! no ignoble name,

Earth sounds my wisdom, and high heav'n my

fame.

20

tal way of speaking ; and in the Poetical parts of the scriptures, the voice of melody, feasting and dancing, are used to express the happiness of a nation.

§. 19. *Behold Ulysses !* ———] The Poet begins with declaring the name of *Ulysses* : the *Phæacians* had already been acquainted with it by the song of *Demodocus*, and therefore it could not fail of raising the utmost attention and curiosity (as *Eusebius* observes) of the whole assembly, to hear the story of so great a Hero. Perhaps it may be thought that *Ulysses* is ostentatious, and speaks of himself too favourably ; but the necessity of it will appear, if we consider that *Ulysses* had nothing but his personal qualifications to engage the *Phæacians* in his favour. It was therefore requisite to make those qualifications known, and this was not possible to be done but by his own relation, he being a stranger among strangers. Besides, he speaks before a vain-glorious people, who thought even boasting no fault. It may be questioned whether *Virgil* be so happy in those respects, when he puts almost the same words into the mouth of *Æneas* ;

“ Sum pius *Æneas*, raptos qui ex hoste penates

“ Classe veho mecum, famâ super æthera notus :”



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 221

My native foil is *Ithaca* the fair,
Where high *Neritus* waves his woods in air :

For his boast contributes nothing to the re-establishment of his affairs, for he speaks to the Goddess *Venus*. Yet *Scaliger* infinitely prefers *Virgil* before *Homer*, though there be no other difference in the words, than *raptos qui ex hoste penates*, instead of

— — — Ὅς πᾶσι δόλοισιν
Ἀνθρώποισι μέλω. ———

He questions whether Subtilties, or δόλοι, ever raised any person's glory to the Heavens ; whereas that is the reward of piety. But the word is to be understood to imply Wisdom, and all the stratagems of war, &c. according to the first verse of the *Odyssey*,

The Man for Wisdom's various arts renown'd.
He is not less severe upon the verses immediately preceding.

Σοὶ δ' ἐμὰ κήδεα θυμὸς ἐπείρῃπειλο γονόεντα, &c.

which lines are undoubtedly very beautiful, and admirably express the number of the sufferings of *Ulysses*; the multitude of them is so great, that they almost confound him; and he seems at a loss where to begin, how to proceed, or where to end; and they agree very well with the proposition in the opening of the *Odyssey*, which was to relate the sufferings of a brave man. The verses which *Scaliger* quotes are

“ Infandum regina jubes renovare dolorem ;
“ *Trojanas* ut opes, &c.”

Omnia sanè non sine suâ divinitate ; and he concludes, that *Virgil* has not so much imitated *Homer*, as taught us how *Homer* ought to have wrote.

χ. 21. — — — — *Ithaca the fair*,
Where high *Neritus*, &c.]

Eustathius gives various interpretations of this position of *Ithaca*; some understand it to signify that it lies low; others explain



222 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

Dulichium, Samè, and Zacynthus crown'd
 With shady mountains, spread their isles around.
 (These to the north and night's dark regions run,
 Those to *Aurora* and the rising sun.) 26
 Low lies our Isle, yet blest in fruitful stores ;
 Strong are her sons, tho' rocky are her shores ;
 And none, ah none so lovely to my sight,
 Of all the lands that heav'n o'erspreads with light !
 In vain *Calypso* long constrain'd my stay, 31
 With sweet, reluctant, amorous delay ;

it to signify that it is of low position, but high with respect to the neighbouring Islands ; others take *πανπερίεστη* (*excellētissima*) in another sense to imply the excellence of the country, which though it lies low, is productive of brave inhabitants, for *Homer* immediately adds ἀγαθὴ καρφόφρος. *Strabo* gives a different exposition ; *Ithaca* is χθαμαλή, as it lies near to the Continent, and *πανπερίεστη*, as it is the utmost of all the Islands towards the North, πρὸς ἄρκτον, for thus πρὸς ζόφον is to be understood. So that *Ithaca*, adds he, is not of a low situation, but as it lies opposed to the Continent, nor the most lofty (ὑψηλοτάτη) but the most extreme of the northern Islands ; for so *πανπερίεστη* signifies. *Dacier* differs from *Strabo* in the explication of πρὸς ἥν τ' ἥελιόν τε, which he believes to mean the South ; he applies the words to the East, or South-east, and appeals to the maps which so describe it. It is the most northern of the Islands, and joins to the Continent of *Epirus* ; it has *Dulichium* on the East, and on the South *Samos* and *Zacynthus*.

§. 31. In vain *Calypso* ———] *Eustathius* observes, that *Ulysses* repeats his refusal of the Goddess *Calypso* and *Circe* in the same words, to shew *Alcinous*, by a secret denial, that he



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 223

With all her Charms as vainly *Circe* strove,
And added magick, to secure my love.
In pomps or joys, the palace or the grot, 35
My country's image never was forgot,
My absent parents rose before my sight,
And distant lay contentment and delight.

Hear then the woes, which mighty *Jove* ordain'd
To wait my passage from the *Trojan* land. 40
The Winds from *Ilion* to the *Cicons'* shore,
Beneath cold *Ismarus*, our vessels bore.

could not be induced to stay from his country, or marry his daughter: he calls *Circe* Δολέεσσα, because she is skilled in magical Incantations: he describes *Ithaca* with all its inconveniencies, to convince *Alcinous* of his veracity, and that he will not deceive him in other circumstances, when he gives so disadvantageous a character of a country for which he expresses so great a fondness; and lastly, in relating the death of his friends, he seems to be guilty of a tautology, in Σάναλον τε μέρος τε. But *Aulus Gellius* gives us the reason of it, *Atrocitatem rei bis idem dicendo auxit, inculcavitque, non igitur illa ejusdem significationis repetitio, ignava & frigida videri debet.*

ψ. 41. — — — to the *Cicons' shore*.] Here is the natural and true beginning of the *Odyssey*, which comprehends all the sufferings of *Ulysses*, and these sufferings take their date immediately after his leaving the shores of *Troy*; from that moment he endeavours to return to his own country, and all the difficulties he meets with in returning, enter into the subject of the Poem. But it may then be asked, if the *Odyssey* does not take up the space of ten years, since *Ulysses* wastes so many in his return; and is not this contrary to the nature



224 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book IX.

We boldly landed on the hostile place,
And sack'd the city, and destroy'd the race,
Their wives made captive, their possessions shar'd,
And ev'ry soldier found a like reward. 46

I then advis'd to fly ; not so the rest,
Who staid to revel, and prolong the feast :

of Epick Poetry, which is agreed must not at the longest exceed the duration of one year, or rather Campaign? The answer is, the Poet lets all the time pass which exceeds the bounds of Epick action, before he opens the Poem; thus *Ulysses* spends some time before he arrives at the Island of *Circe*, with her he continues one year, and seven with *Calypso*; he begins artificially at the conclusion of the action, and finds an opportunity to repeat the most considerable and necessary incidents which preceded the opening of the *Odyssey*; by this method he reduces the duration of it into less compass than the space of two months. This conduct is absolutely necessary, for from the time that the Poet introduces his Hero upon the stage, he ought to continue his action to the very end of it, that he may never afterwards appear idle or out of motion: this is verified in *Ulysses*; from the moment he leaves the Island of *Ogygia* to the death of the Suitors, he is never out of view, never idle; he is always either in action, or preparing for it, till he is re-established in his dominions. If the Poet had followed the natural order of the action, he, like *Lucan*, would not have wrote an Epick Poem, but an History in verse.

ψ. 44. *And sack'd the city ———*] The Poet assigns no reason why *Ulysses* destroys this City of the *Ciconians*, but we may learn from the *Iliad* that they were auxiliaries of *Troy*, book the second.

With great *Euphemus* the *Ciconians* move,
Sprung from *Træzenian Cæus*, lov'd of *Jove*.

And therefore *Ulysses* assaults them as enemies. *Eustathius*.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 225

The fatted sheep and fable bulls they flay,
And bowls fly round, and riot wastes the day. 50
Meantime the *Cicons*, to their holds retir'd,
Call on the *Cicons*, with new fury fir'd ;
With early morn the gather'd country swarms,
And all the Continent is bright with arms :
Thick as the budding leaves or rising flow'rs 55
O'erspread the land, when spring descends in
show'rs :

All expert soldiers, skill'd on foot to dare,
Or from the bounding courser urge the war.
Now fortune changes (so the Fates ordain)
Our hour was come to taste our share of pain. 60
Close at the ships the bloody fight began,
Wounded they wound, and man expires on man.
Long as the morning sun increasing bright
O'er heav'n's pure azure spread the growing
light,

Promiscuous death the form of war confounds, 65
Each adverse battle gor'd with equal wounds :
But when his ev'ning wheels o'erhung the main,
Then conquest crown'd the fierce *Ciconian* train.



226 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

Six brave companions from each ship we lost,
The rest escape in haste, and quit the coast. 70
With sails outspread we fly th' unequal strife,
Sad for their loss, but joyful of our life.
Yet as we fled, our fellows rites we pay'd,
And thrice we call'd on each unhappy Shade.

†. 69. *Six brave companions from each ship we lost.*] This is one of the passages which fell under the censure of *Zoilus*; it is very improbable, says that Critick, that each vessel should lose six men exactly; this seems a too equal distribution to be true, considering the chance of battle. But it has been answered, that *Ulysses* had twelve vessels, and that in this engagement he lost seventy-two soldiers; so that the meaning is, that taking the total of his loss, and dividing it equally through the whole fleet, he found it amounted exactly to six men in every vessel. This will appear to be a true solution, if we remember that there was a necessity to supply the loss of any one ship out of the others that had suffered less: so that though one vessel lost more than the rest, yet being recruited equally from the rest of the fleet, there would be exactly six men wanting in every vessel. *Eustathius*.

†. 74. *And thrice we call'd on each unhappy shade.*] This passage preserves a piece of Antiquity: it was the custom of the *Grecians*, when their friends died upon foreign shores, to use this ceremony of recalling their souls, though they obtained not their bodies, believing by this method that they transported them to their own country: *Pindar* mentions the same practice,

Κέλεται γὰρ εἶν
Ψυχὰν κόμιζαι Φρίξθαι, &c.

That is, “*Phrixus* commands thee to call his soul into his
“own country.” Thus the *Athenians*, when they lost any



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 227

Meanwhile the God, whose hand the thunder
forms, 75
Drives clouds on clouds, and blackens heav'n
with storms :

Wide o'er the waste the rage of *Boreas* sweeps,
And Night rush'd headlong on the shaded deeps.
Now here, now there, the giddy ships are borne,
And all the rattling shrouds in fragments torn. 80
We furl'd the sail, we ply'd the lab'ring oar,
Took down our masts, and row'd our ships to shore.
Two tedious days and two long nights we lay,
O'erwatch'd and batter'd in the naked bay.
But the third morning when *Aurora* brings, 85
We rear the masts, we spread the canvas wings ;

men at sea, went to the shores, and calling thrice on their names, raised a Cenotaph or empty monument to their memories ; by performing which solemnity, they invited the shades of the departed to return, and performed all rites as if the bodies of the dead had really been buried by them in their sepulchres. *Eustathius*.

The *Romans* as well as the *Greeks* followed the same custom ; thus *Virgil*,

“ — — — Et magnâ Manes ter voce vocavi.”

The occasion of this practice arose from the opinion, that the souls of the departed were not admitted into the state of the happy, without the performance of the sepulchral solemnities :



228 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

Refresh'd, and careless on the deck reclin'd,
 We sit, and trust the pilot and the wind.
 Then to my native country had I fail'd :
 But the cape doubled, adverse winds prevail'd. 90
 Strong was the tide, which by the northern blast
 Impell'd, our vessels on *Cythera* cast.
 Nine days our fleet th' uncertain tempest bore
 Far in wide ocean, and from sight of shore :
 The tenth we touch'd by various errors tost, 95
 The Land of *Lotos*, and the flow'ry coast.

*. 95. *The tenth we touch'd* ———
The Land of Lotos ———]

This passage has given occasion for much controversy ; for since the *Lotophagi* in reality are distant from the *Malean* Cape twenty-two thousand five hundred stades, *Ulysses* must sail above two thousand every day, if in nine days he sailed to the *Lotophagi*. This objection would be unanswerable, if we place that nation in the *Atlantick* Ocean ; but *Dacier* observes from *Strabo*, that *Polybius* examined this point, and thus gives us the result of it. This great Historian maintains, that *Homer* has not placed the *Lotophagi* in the *Atlantic* Ocean, as he does the Islands of *Circe* and *Calypso*, because it was improbable that in the compass of ten days the most favourable winds could have carried *Ulysses* from the *Malean* Cape into that Ocean ; it therefore follows, that the Poet has given us the true situation of this nation, conformable to Geography, and placed it as it really lies, in the *Mediterranean* ; now in ten days a good wind will carry a vessel from *Malea* into the *Mediterranean*, as *Homer* relates.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 229

We climb'd the beach, and springs of water found,
Then spread our hasty banquet on the ground.
Three men were sent, deputed from the crew,
(An herald one) the dubious coast to view, 100
And learn what habitants possess the place.
They went, and found a hospitable race ;

This is an instance that *Homer* sometimes follows truth without fiction, at other times disguises it. But I confess I think *Homer's* Poetry would have been as beautiful if he had described all his Islands in their true positions : his inconstancy in this point, may seem to introduce confusion and ambiguity, when the truth would have been more clear, and as beautiful in his Poetry.

Nothing can better shew the great deference which former ages paid *Homer*, than these defences of the learned Ancients ; they continually ascribe his deviations from truth, (as in the instance before us) to design, not to ignorance ; to his art as a Poet, and not to want of skill as a Geographer. In a writer of less fame, such relations might be thought errors, but in *Homer* they are either understood to be no errors, or if errors, they are vindicated by the greatest names of Antiquity.

Eustathius adds, that the Ancients disagree about this Island : some place it about *Cyrene*, from *Maurusia* of the *African* Moors : it is also named *Meninx*, and lies upon the *African* coast, near the lesser *Syrte*. It is about three hundred and fifty stades in length, and somewhat less in breadth : it is also named *Lotophagitis* from *Lotos*.

ψ. 100. *An herald one.*] The reason why the Poet mentions the Herald in particular, is because his office was sacred ; and by the common law of nations his person inviolable : *Ulysses* therefore joins an Herald in this commission, for the greater security of those whom he sends to search the country. *Eustathius*.



230 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

Not prone to ill, nor strange to foreign guest,
They eat, they drink; and nature gives the feast;
The trees around them, all their fruit produce; 105
Lotos, the name; divine, nectarious juice!

✧. 106. *Lotos*.] *Eustathius* assures us, that there are various kinds of it. It has been a question whether it is an herb, a root, or a tree: he is of opinion, that *Homer* speaks of it as an herb; for he calls it ἄρθρον εἰδαρ, and that the word ἀρτέλεισθαι is in its proper sense applied to the grazing of beasts, and therefore he judges it not to be a tree, or root. He adds, there is an *Ægyptian Lotos*, which, as *Herodotus* affirms, grows in great abundance along the *Nile* in the time of its inundations; it resembles (says that Historian in his *Euterpe*) a Lily; the *Ægyptians* dry it in the sun, then take the pulp out of it, which grows like the head of a poppy, and bake it as bread; this kind of it agrees likewise with the ἄρθρον εἰδαρ of *Homer*. *Athenæus* writes of the *Lybian Lotos* in the fourteenth book of his *Deipnosophist*; he quotes the words of *Polybius* in the twelfth book of his History, now not extant; that Historian speaks of it as an eye-witness, having examined the nature of it. “The *Lotos* is a tree of no great height, rough
“and thorny: it bears a green leaf, somewhat thicker and
“broader than that of the bramble or briar; its fruit at
“first is like the ripe berries of the Myrtle, both in size
“and colour, but when it ripens it turns to purple; it is
“then about the bigness of an olive; it is round, and con-
“tains a very small kernel; when it is ripe they gather it,
“and bruising it among bread-corn, they put it up into a
“vessel, and keep it as food for their slaves; they dress it
“after the same manner for their other domesticks, but first
“take out the kernel from it: it has the taste of a fig, or
“dates, but is of a far better smell: they likewise make a
“wine of it, by steeping and bruising it in water; it has a
“very agreeable taste, like wine tempered with honey. They



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 231

(Thence call'd *Lotophagi*) which whoſo taſtes,
 Infatiate riots in the ſweet repaſts,
 Nor other home nor other care intends, 109
 But quits his houſe, his country, and his friends :
 The three we ſent, from off th' enchanting ground
 We dragg'd reluctant, and by force we bound :
 The reſt in haſte forſook the pleaſing ſhore,
 Or, the charm taſted, had return'd no more.
 Now plac'd in order on their banks, they ſweep 115
 The ſea's ſmooth face, and cleave the hoary deep ;
 With heavy hearts we labour thro' the tide,
 To coaſts unknown, and oceans yet untry'd.

“ drink it without mixing it with water, but it will not keep
 “ above ten days, they therefore make it only in ſmall quan-
 “ tities for immediate uſe.” Perhaps it was this laſt kind of
Lotos, which the companions of *Ulyſſes* taſted ; and if it was
 thus prepared, it gives a reaſon why they were overcome with
 it ; for being a wine, it had the power of intoxication.

✱. 114. *The charm once taſted, had return'd no more.*] It
 muſt be confeſſed, that the effects of this *Lotos* are extraordi-
 nary, and ſeem fabulous ; how then ſhall we reconcile the re-
 lation to credibility ? the foundation of it might perhaps be
 no more than this : the companions of *Ulyſſes* might be will-
 ing to ſettle amongſt theſe *Lotophagi*, being won by the plea-
 ſure of the place, and tired with a life of danger and the pe-
 rils of ſeas. Or perhaps it is only an Allegory, to teach us
 that thoſe who indulge themſelves in pleaſures, are with dif-
 ficulty withdrawn from them, and want an *Ulyſſes* to lead them
 by a kind of violence into the paths of glory.



The land of *Cyclops* first ; a savage kind,
Nor tam'd by manners, nor by laws confin'd : 120

§. 119. *The land of Cyclops first.*] *Homer* here confines himself to the true Geography of *Sicily* : for, in reality, a ship may easily sail in one day from the land of the *Lotophagi* to *Sicily* : these *Cyclops* inhabited the western part of that Island, about *Drepane* and *Lilybæum*. *Bochart* shews us, that they derive their name from the place of their habitation ; for the *Phæacians* call them *Chek-lub*, by contraction for *Chek-lelub* ; that is, the gulf of *Lilybæum*, or the men who dwell about the *Lilybæum* gulf. The *Greeks* (who understood not the *Phæacian* language) formed the word *Cyclop*, from *Chek-lub*, from the affinity of sound ; which word in the *Greek* language, signifying a circular eye, might give occasion to fable that they had but one large round eye in the middle of their foreheads. *Dacier*.

Eustathius tells us, that the eye of *Cyclops* is an allegory, to represent that in anger, or any other violent passion, men see but one single object, as that passion directs, or see but with one eye : εἰς ἓν τι, καὶ μόνον ἑφορᾷ ; and that passion transforms us into a kind of savages, and makes us brutal and sanguinary, like this *Polypheme* ; and he that by reason extinguishes such a passion, may like *Ulysses* be said to put out that eye that made him see but one single object.

I have already given another reason of this fiction ; namely their wearing a head-piece, or martial vizor, that had but one sight through it. The vulgar form their judgments from appearances ; and a mariner, who passed these coasts at a distance, observing the resemblance of a broad eye in the forehead of one of these *Cyclops*, might relate it accordingly, and impose it as a truth upon the credulity of the ignorant : it is notorious that things equally monstrous have found belief in all ages.

But it may be asked if there were any such Persons who bore the name of *Cyclops* ? No less an Historian than *Thucydides* informs us, that *Sicily* was at first possessed and inhabited



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 233

Untaught to plant, to turn the glebe and sow ;
 They all their products to free nature owe.
 The soil untill'd a ready harvest yields,
 With wheat and barley wave the golden fields,
 Spontaneous wines from weighty clusters
 pour, 125
 And Jove descends in each prolifick show'r.

by Giants, by the *Læstrigons* and *Cyclops*, a barbarous and inhuman people : but he adds, that these savages dwelt only in one part of that Island.

Cedrenus gives us an exact description of the *Cyclops* :
 Ἐκεῖθεν Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐμπίπτει Κύκλωπι ἐν Σικελίᾳ ἕκ ἐνὶ ὀφθαλμῷ, &c.
 “ *Ulysses* fell among the *Cyclops* in *Sicily* ; a people not one-
 “ ey'd, according to the Mythologists, but men like other
 “ men, only of a more gigantick stature, and of a barba-
 “ rous and savage temper.” From this description, we may
 see what *Homer* writes as a Poet, and what as an Historian ;
 he paints these people in general agreeably to their persons,
 only disguises some features, to give an ornament to his re-
 lation, and to introduce the Marvellous, which demands a
 place chiefly in Epick Poetry.

What *Homer* speaks of the fertility of *Sicily*, is agreeable
 to History : it was called anciently *Romani Imperii Horreum*.
Pliny, lib. x. cap. 10. writes, that the *Leontine* plains bear for
 every grain of corn, an hundred. - *Diodorus Siculus* relates in
 his History what *Homer* speaks in Poetry, that the fields of
Leontium yield wheat without the culture of the Husband-
 man : he was an eye-witness, being a native of the Island.
 From hence in general it may be observed, that wherever we
 can trace *Homer*, we find, if not historick truth, yet the re-
 semblance of it ; that is, as plain truth as can be related with-
 out converting his Poem into an History.



234 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book ix.

By these no statutes and no rights are known,
No council held, no monarch fills the throne,

ψ. 127. *By these no statutes and no rights are known,
No council held, no monarch fills the throne.]*

Plato (observes *Spondanus*) in his third book of laws; treats of Government as practised in the first ages of the world; and refers to this passage of *Homer*; mankind was originally independant, every "Master of a family was a kind of King" of his family, and reigned over his wife and children like "the *Cyclopeans*," according to the expression of *Homer*,

Τοῖσιν δ' ἔτ' ἀγοραὶ βελτηφόροι, ἔτε δέμιστες.

Aristotle likewise complains, that even in his times, in many places, men lived without laws, according to their own fancies, ζῆ ἕκαστος ὥς βέλεται, κυκλωπικῶς δεμιστέων παίδων, ἢ ἀλόχε, referring likewise to this passage of *Homer*.

Dacier adds from *Plato*, that after the Deluge, three manners of life succeeded among mankind; the first was rude and savage; men were afraid of a second flood; and therefore inhabited the summits of mountains, without any dependance upon one another, and each was absolute in his own family: the second was less brutal; as the fear of the Deluge wore away by degrees, they descended towards the bottom of mountains, and began to have some intercourse: the third was more polished; when a full security from the apprehensions of a flood was established by time, they then began to inhabit the plains, and a more general commerce by degrees prevailing, they entered into societies, and established laws for the general good of the whole community. These *Cyclopeans* maintained the first state of life in the days of *Ulysses*; they had no intercourse with other societies, by reason of their barbarities, and consequently their manners were not at all polished by the general laws of humanity. This account agrees excellently with the holy Scriptures, and perhaps *Plato* borrowed it from the writings of *Moses*; after the Deluge men retreated to the mountains for fear of a



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 235

But high on hills or airy cliffs they dwell,
Or deep in caves whose entrance leads to hell. 130
Each rules his race, his neighbour not his care,
Heedless of others, to his own severe.

Oppos'd to the *Cyclopean* coasts, there lay
An Isle, whose hills their subject fields survey ;
Its name *Lacæa*, crown'd with many a grove, 135
Where savage goats thro' pathless thickets rove :
No needy mortals here, with hunger bold,
Or wretched hunters, thro' the wint'ry cold

second flood ; the chief riches, like these *Cyclopeans*, consisted in flocks and herds ; and every master of a family ruled his house without any controul or subordination.

ψ. 129. *But high on hills — — or deep in caves.*] This is said, to give an air of probability to the revenge which *Ulysses* takes upon this giant, and indeed to the whole story. He describes his solitary life, to shew that he was utterly destitute of assistance ; and it is for the same reason, continues *Eustathius*, that the Poet relates that he left his fleet under a desert neighbouring Island, namely to make it probable, that the *Cyclops* could not seize it, or pursue *Ulysses*, having no shipping.

ψ. 134. *An Isle, whose hills, &c.*] This little Isle is now called *Ægusa*, which signifies the Isle of goats. *Cluverius* describes it after the manner of *Homer*, *Prata mellia. & irrigua, solum fertile, portum commodum, fontes limpidos*. It is not certain whether the Poet gives any name to it ; perhaps it had not received any in those ages, it being without inhabitants ; though some take *Λαζαία* for a proper name, as is observed by *Eustathius*.



236 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

Pursue their flight ; but leave them safe to bound
 From hill to hill, o'er all the desert ground. 140
 Nor knows the foil to feed the fleecy care,
 Or feels the labours of the crooked share ;
 But uninhabited, untill'd, unfown
 It lies, and breeds the bleating goat alone.
 For there no vessel with vermilion prore, 145
 Or bark of traffick, glides from shore to shore ;
 The rugged race of savages, unskill'd
 The seas to traverse, or the ships to build,
 Gaze on the coast, nor cultivate the soil ;
 Unlearn'd in all th' industrious arts of toil. 150
 Yet here all products and all plants abound,
 Sprung from the fruitful genius of the ground ;
 Fields waving high with heavy crops are seen,
 And vines that flourish in eternal green,
 Refreshing meads along the murm'ring main, 155
 And fountains streaming down the fruitful
 plain.

‡. 144. *Bleating Goat.*] It is exactly thus in the original, verse 124, *μηκάδας*, *balantes*; which *Pollux*, *lib. v.* observes not to be the proper term for the voice of goats, which is *φριμαγμάς*.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 237

A port there is, inclos'd on either side,
 Where ships may rest, unanchor'd and unty'd ;
 'Till the glad mariners incline to sail,
 And the sea whitens with the rising gale. 160
 High at its head, from out the cavern'd rock
 In living rills a gushing fountain broke :
 Around it, and above, for ever green
 The bushing alders form'd a shady scene.
 Hither some fav'ring God, beyond our thought, 165
 Thro' all-surrounding shade our navy brought ;
 For gloomy Night descended on the main,
 Nor glimmer'd *Phæbe* in th' ethereal plain :
 But all unseen the clouded Island lay,
 And all unseen the surge and rolling sea, 170
 'Till safe we anchor'd in the shelter'd bay :

†. 165. *Hither some fav'ring God* ———] This circumstance is inserted with great judgment, *Ulysses* otherwise might have landed in *Sicily*, and fallen into the hands of the *Cyclopeans*, and consequently been lost inevitably : he therefore piously ascribes his safety, by being driven upon this desolate Island, to the guidance of the Gods ; he uses it as a retreat, leaves his navy there, and passes over into *Sicily* in one single vessel, undiscovered by these gigantick savages ; this reconciles the relation to probability, and renders his escape practicable. *Euſtathius*.



238 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

Our fails we gather'd, cast our cables o'er,
 And slept secure along the sandy shore.
 Soon as again the rosy morning shone, 174
 Reveal'd the landschape and the scene unknown,
 With wonder seiz'd we view the pleasing ground,
 And walk delighted, and expatiate round.
 Rous'd by the woodland nymphs, at early dawn,
 The mountain goats came bounding o'er the lawn:

ψ. 178. *The woodland nymphs.*] This passage is not without obscurity, and it is not easy to understand what is meant by *the daughters of Jupiter*. *Eustathius* tells us, the Poet speaks allegorically, and that he means to specify the plants and herbs of the field. *Jupiter* denotes the air, not only in *Homer*, but in the *Latin Poets*. Thus *Virgil*.

“ Tum pater omnipotens fœcundis imbribus Æther
 “ Conjugis in gremium lætæ descendit ——— ”

and consequently the herbs and plants, being nourished by the mild air and fruitful rains, may be said to be the daughters of *Jupiter*, or offspring of the skies; and these goats and beasts of the field, being fed by these plants and herbs, may be said to be awakened by the daughters of *Jupiter*, that is, they awake to feed upon the herbage early in the morning. Κῆραι Διὸς, ἀλληγορικῶς αἱ τῶν φυτῶν αὐξητικαὶ δυνάμεις, αἷς δὲ Ζεὺς ποιεῖ. Thus *Homer* makes Deities of the vegetative faculties and virtues of the field. I fear such boldnesses would not be allowed in modern Poetry.

It must be confessed that this interpretation is very refined: but I am sure it will be a more natural explication to take these for the real mountain Nymphs (*Oreades*) as they are in many places of the *Odyssey*; the very expression is found in the sixth book,



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 239

In haste our fellows to the ships repair, 180
 For arms and weapons of the filvan war;
 Straight in three squadrons all our crew we part,
 And bend the bow, or wing the missile dart;
 The bounteous Gods afford a copious prey,
 And nine fat goats each vessel bears away: 185
 The royal bark had ten. Our ships compleat
 We thus supply'd, (for twelve were all the fleet).

Here, till the setting sun roll'd down the light,
 We sat indulging in the genial rite:
 Nor wines were wanting; those from ample jars
 We drained the prize of our *Ciconian* wars. 191
 The land of *Cyclops* lay in prospect near;
 The voice of goats and bleating flocks we hear, }
 And from their mountains rising smokes appear. }
 Now sunk the sun, and darkness cover'd o'er 195
 The face of things: along the sea-beat shore

— — — Νύμφαι κῆραι Διὸς ———

and there signifies the nymphs attending upon *Diana* in her sports: and immediately after *Ulysses*, being awakened by a sudden noise, mistakes *Nausicaa* and her damsels for Nymphs of the mountains or floods. This conjecture will not be without probability, if we remember that these Nymphs were huntresses, as is evident from their relation to *Diana*. Why then may not this other expression be meant of the Nymphs that are fabled to inhabit the mountains?



240 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

Satiate we slept : but when the sacred dawn
 Arising glitter'd o'er the dewy lawn,
 I call'd my fellows, and these words addrest.
 My dear associates, here indulge your rest : 200
 While, with my single ship, advent'rous I
 Go forth, the manners of yon men to try ;
 Whether a race unjust, of barb'rous might,
 Rude, and unconscious of a stranger's right ;
 Or such who harbour pity in their breast, 205
 Revere the Gods, and succour the distressed ?

This said, I climb'd my vessel's lofty side ;
 My train obey'd me and the ship unty'd.

†. 201. *While, with my single ship, advent'rous I.*] The Reader may be pleased to observe, that the Poet has here given the reins to his fancy, and run out into a luxuriant description of *Ægusa* and *Sicily* : he refreshes the mind of the Reader with a pleasing and beautiful scene, before he enters upon a story of so much horror, as this of the *Cyclops*.

A very sufficient reason may be assigned, why *Ulysses* here goes in person to search this land : he dares not, as *Eustathius* remarks, trust his companions ; their disobedience among the *Ciconians*, and their unworthy conduct among the *Lotophagi*, have convinced him that no confidence is to be reposed in them : this seems probable, and upon this probability *Homer* proceeds to bring about the punishment of *Polypheme*, which the wisdom of *Ulysses* effects, and it is an action of importance, and consequently ought to be performed by the Hero of the Poem.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 241

In order seated on their banks, they sweep
Neptune's smooth face, and cleave the yielding
 deep. 210.

When to the nearest verge of land we drew,
 Fast by the sea a lonely cave we view,
 High, and with dark'ning laurels cover'd o'er;
 Where sheep and goats lay slumb'ring round the
 shore.

Near this, a fence of marble from the rock, 215
 Brown with o'er-arching pine, and spreading oak,
 A Giant-shepherd here his flock maintains
 Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
 In shelter thick of horrid shade reclin'd;
 And gloomy mischiefs labour in his mind. 220
 A form enormous! far unlike the race
 Of human birth, in stature, or in face;

§. 221. *A form enormous! far unlike the race of human birth.*]
Geropius Becanus, an *Antwerpian*, has wrote a large discourse
 to prove, that there never were any such men as Giants;
 contrary to the testimony both of profane and sacred His-
 tory: thus *Moses* speaks of the *Rephaims* of *Asteroth*, the *Zam-
 zummims* of *Ham*, the *Emims* of *Moab*, and *Anakims* of *He-
 bron*. See *Deut.* ii. ver. 20. “That also was called a land
 “ of Giants, it was a great people, and tall as the *Zamzum-
 “ mims.*” Thus *Goliath* must be allowed to be a Giant, for



242 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

As some lone mountain's monstrous growth he
stood,

Crown'd with rough thickets, and a nodding wood.

he was six cubits and a span, that is, nine feet and a span in height ; his coat of mail weighed five thousand shekels of brass, about one hundred and fifty pounds : (but I confess others understand the lesser Shekel) the head of his spear alone weighed six hundred shekels of iron, that is, about eighteen or nineteen pounds. We find the like relations in profane history : *Plutarch* in his life of *Theseus* says, that age was productive of men of prodigious stature, Giants. Thus *Diodorus Siculus* ; *Ægyptii scribunt, Isidiis ætate, fuisse vasto corpore homines, quos Græci dixere Gigantes.* *Herodotus* affirms that the body of *Orestes* was dug up, and appeared to be seven cubits long ; but *Aulus Gellius* believes this to be an error. *Josephus* writes, l. xviii. c. 6. that *Vitellius* sent a Jew named *Eleazar*, seven cubits in height, as a present from *Artabanus* King of the *Parthians*, to *Tiberius Cæsar* ; this man was ten feet and a half high. *Pliny* vii. 16. speaks of a man that was nine feet nine inches high ; and in another place, vi. 30. *Sybortas, gentem Æthiopum Nomadum, octona cubita longitudin excedere.*

Thus it is evident, that there have been men of very extraordinary stature in former ages. Though perhaps such instances were not frequent in any age or any nation. So that *Homer* only amplifies, not invents ; and as there was really a people called *Cyclopeans*, so they might be men of great stature, or Giants.

It may seem strange that in all ancient stories the first planters of most nations are recorded to be Giants ; I scarce can persuade myself but such accounts are generally fabulous ; and hope to be pardoned for a conjecture which may give a seeming reason how such stories came to prevail. The *Greeks* were a people of very great antiquity ; they made many expeditions, as appears from *Jason*, &c. and sent out



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 243

I left my vessel at the point of land, 225
 And close to guard it, gave our crew command :
 With only twelve the boldest and the best,
 I seek th' adventure, and forsake the rest.
 Then took a goatskin fill'd with precious wine,
 The gift of *Maron* of *Evantheus*' line, 230 }
 (The Priest of *Phæbus* at th' *Ismarian* shrine.) }

frequent Colonies : now the head of every Colony was called *ἄναξ*, and these adventurers being persons of great figure in story, were recorded as men of war, of might and renown, through the old world : it is therefore not impossible but the *Hebrews* might form their word *Anac*, from the *Greek* *ἄναξ*, and use it to denote persons of uncommon might and abilities. These they called *Anac*, and sons of *Anac* ; and afterwards in a less proper sense used it to signify men of uncommon stature, or Giants. So that in this sense, all nations may be said to be originally peopled by a son of *Anac*, or a Giant. But this is submitted as a conjecture to the Reader's judgment.

ψ. 229. *Precious wine, the gift of Maron.*] Such digressions as these are frequent in *Homer*, but I am far from thinking them always beauties : it is true, they give variety to Poetry ; but whether that be an equivalent for calling off the attention of the Reader from the more important action, and diverting it with small incidents, is what I much question. It is not indeed impossible but this *Maron* might have been the friend of *Homer*, and this praise of him will then be a monument of his grateful disposition ; and in this view a beauty. It must be confessed that *Ulysses* makes use of this wine to a very good effect, viz. to bring about the destruction of *Polypheme*, and his own deliverance ; and therefore it was necessary to set it off very particularly, but this might



244 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

In sacred shade his honour'd mansion stood
 Amidst *Apollo's* consecrated wood ;
 Him, and his house, heav'n mov'd my mind to save,
 And costly presents in return he gave ; 335
 Seven golden talents to perfection wrought,
 A silver bowl that held a copious draught,
 And twelve large vessels of unmingled wine,
 Mellifluous, undecaying, and divine !
 Which now some ages from his race conceal'd, 240
 The hoary Sire in gratitude reveal'd ;
 Such was the wine : to quench whose fervent steam,
 Scarce twenty measures from the 'living stream
 To cool one cup suffic'd : the goblet crown'd
 Breath'd aromattick fragrancies around. 245

Have been done in fewer lines. As it now stands it is a little Episode ; our expectations are raised to learn the event of so uncommon an adventure, when all of a sudden *Homer* breaks the story, and gives us a History of *Maron*. But I distrust my judgment much rather than *Homer's*.

¶. 243. Scarce twenty measures from the living stream
 To cool one cup suffic'd ———]

There is no wine of so strong a body as to bear such a disproportionable quantity ; but *Homer* amplifies the strength of it to prepare the Reader for its surprising effects immediately upon *Polyphemus*.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 245

Of this an ample vase we heav'd aboard,
 And brought another with provisions stor'd.
 My soul foreboded I should find the bow'r
 Of some fell monster, fierce with barb'rous pow'r,
 Some rustick wretch, who liv'd in heav'n's de-
 spight, 250

Contemning laws, and trampling on the right.
 The cave we found, but vacant all within,
 (His flock the Giant tended on the green)
 But round the grot we gaze ; and all we view,
 In order rang'd, our admiration drew : 255
 The bending shelves with loads of cheeses prest,
 The folded flocks each sep'rate from the rest,

ψ. 250. *Some rustick wretch, who liv'd, &c.*] This whole passage must be considered as told by a person long after the adventure was past, otherwise how should *Ulysses* know that this cave was the habitation of a savage monster before he had seen him ? and when he tells us that himself and twelve companions went to search, what people were inhabitants of this Island ? *Eustathius* and *Dasier* seem both to overlook this observation ; for in a following note she condemns *Ulysses* for not flying from the Island, as he was advised by his companions. But if, on the other hand, we suppose that *Ulysses* was under apprehensions, from the savageness of the place, of finding a savage race of people, it will be natural enough that his mind should forebode as much ; and it appears from other passages, that this sort of instinctive presage was a favourite opinion of *Homer* .



246 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK XI.

(The larger here, and there the lesser lambs,
The new fall'n young here bleating for their dams;
The kid distinguish'd from the lambkin lies :) 260
The cavern echoes with responsive cries.
Capacious chargers all around were laid,
Full pails, and vessels of the milking trade.
With fresh provisions hence our fleet to store
My friends advise me, and to quit the shore; 265
Or drive a flock of sheep and goats away,
Consult our safety, and put off to sea.
Their wholesome counsel rashly I declin'd,
Curious to view the man of monstrous kind,
And try what social rites a savage lends: 270
Dire rites alas! and fatal to my friends!

Then first a fire we kindle, and prepare
For his return with sacrifice and pray'r.
The laden shelves afford us full repast;
We sit expecting. Lo! he comes at last. 275
Near half a forest on his back he bore,
And cast the pond'rous burden at the door.
It thunder'd as it fell. We trembled then,
And fought the deep recesses of the den,



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 247

Now driv'n before him, thro' the arching rock, 285
Came tumbling, heaps on heaps, th' unnumber'd
flock :

Big-udder'd ewes, and goats of female kind,
(The males were penn'd in outward courts behind)
Then, heav'd on high, a rock's enormous weight
To the cave's mouth he roll'd, and clos'd the gate.
(Scarce twenty-four wheel'd cars, compact and
strong, 286

The massy load could bear, or roll along.)
He next betakes him to his ev'ning cares,
And sitting down, to milk his flocks prepares ;
Of half their udders eases first the dams, 290
Then to the mother's teat submits the lambs.
Half the white stream to heard'ning cheese he
prest,

And high in wicker-baskets heap'd : the rest,
Reserv'd in bowls, supply'd the nightly feast. }

His labour done, he fir'd the pile that gave 295
A sudden blaze, and lighted all the cave.

We stand discovered by the rising fires ;
Askance the giant glares, and thus inquires



248 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

What are ye, guests ; on what adventure, say,
Thus far ye wander thro' the wat'ry way ? 300
Pirates perhaps, who seek thro' seas unknown
The lives of others, and expose your own ?

His voice like thunder thro' the cavern sounds :
My bold companions thrilling fear confounds,
Appall'd at sight of more than mortal man ! 305
At length, with heart recover'd, I began.

From *Troy's* fam'd fields, sad wand'ers o'er the
main,

Behold the relicks of the *Grecian* train !

Thro' various seas by various vessels tost, 309
And forc'd by storms, unwilling, on your coast ;

*. 307. *From Troy's fam'd fields, &c.*] This Speech is very well adapted to make an Impression upon *Polypheme*. *Ulysses* applies to move either his fears or his compassion ; he tells him he is an unfortunate person, and comes as a suppliant ; and if this prevails nothing, he adds, he is a subject of the great *Agamemnon*, who had lately destroyed a mighty kingdom : which is spoken to make him afraid to offer violence to the subject of a King who had Power to revenge any injuries offered his People. To intimidate him further, he concludes with the mention of the Gods, and in particular of *Jupiter*, as avengers of any breach of the laws of hospitality : these are arguments well chosen to move any person, but an inhuman *Polypheme*. *Eustathius*.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 249

Far from our destin'd course, and native land,
Such was our fate, and such high *Jove's* command!
Nor what we are befits us to disclaim,
Atrides' friends, (in arms a mighty name)
Who taught proud *Troy* and all her sons to bow; 315
Victors of late, but humble suppliants now!
Low at thy knee thy succour we implore;
Respect us, human, and relieve us, poor.
At least some hospitable gift bestow;
'Tis what the happy to the unhappy owe: 320
'Tis what the Gods require: those Gods revere,
The poor and stranger are their constant care;
To *Jove* their cause, and their revenge belongs,
He wanders with them, and he feels their wrongs.

Fools that ye are! (the savage thus replies, 325
His inward fury blazing at his eyes)
Or strangers, distant far from our abodes,
To bid me rev'rence or regard the Gods.
Know then we *Cyclops* are a race, above 329
Those air-bred people, and their goat-nurs'd *Jove*:
And learn, our Power proceeds with thee and thine,
Not as He wills, but as ourselves incline.



250 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

But answer, the good ship that brought ye o'er,
Where lies she anchor'd? near or off the shore?

Thus he. His meditated fraud I find, 335
(Vers'd in the turns of various human kind)
And cautious, thus. Against a dreadful rock,
Fast by your shore the gallant vessel broke,
Scarce with these few I 'scap'd; of all my train, 339
Whom angry *Neptune* whelm'd beneath the main;
The scatter'd wreck the winds blew back again. }

He answer'd with his deed. His bloody hand
Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band;
And dash'd like dogs against the stony floor: 344
The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore.

ψ. 344. *And dash'd like dogs ———*
The pavement swims, &c.]

There is a great beauty in the versification in the original.

Σὺν δὲ δύο μάρψας, ὥς τε κύλακας ποτὶ γαίῃ
κόπῃ ἐκ δ' ἐγκέφαλῳ χαμάδις ῥέει, δεῦτε δὲ γαίαν.

Dionysius Halicarn. takes notice of it, in his Dissertation upon placing words: when the companions of *Ulysses*, says that Author, are dashed against the rock, to express the horror of the action, *Homer* dwells upon the most inharmonious harsh letters and syllables: he no where uses any softness, or any run of verses to please the ear. *Scaliger* injudiciously condemns this description; “*Homer*, (says he) makes use of the
“ most offensive and loathsome expressions, more fit for a



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 251

Torn limb from limb, he spreads his horrid feast,
 And fierce devours it like a mountain beast :
 He sucks the marrow, and the blood he drains,
 Nor entrails, flesh, nor solid bone remains.
 We see the death from which we cannot move, 350
 And humbled groan beneath the hand of Jove.
 His ample maw with human carnage fill'd,
 A milky deluge next the giant swill'd ;
 Then stretch'd in length o'er half the cavern'd rock,
 Lay senseless, and supine, amidst the flock. 355
 To seize the time, and with a sudden wound
 To fix the slumb'ring monster to the ground,
 My soul impels me ; and in act I stand
 To draw the sword ; but wisdom held my hand.
 A deed so rash had finish'd all our fate, 360
 No mortal forces from the lofty gate

“ butcher's shambles than the majesty of Heroick Poetry.”
Macrobius, lib. v. cap. 13. of his *Saturnalia*, commends these
 lines of *Homer*, and even prefers them before the same de-
 scription in *Virgil*, his words are, *Narrationem facti nudam*
Maro posuit, Homerus πάθος miscuit, & dolore narrandi invidiam
crudelitatis æquavit. And indeed he must be a strange Critick
 that expects soft verses upon a horrible occasion, whereas the
 verses ought, if possible, to represent the thought they are
 intended to convey ; and every person's ear will inform him that
Homer has not in this passage executed this rule unsuccessfully.



252 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

Could roll the rock. In hopeless grief we lay,
And sigh, expecting the return of day.
Now did the rosy finger'd morn arise,
And shed her sacred light along the skies. 365
He wakes, he lights the fire, he milks the dams,
And to the mother's teats submits the lambs.
The task thus finish'd of his morning hours,
Two more he snatches, murders, and devours.
Then pleas'd and whistling, drives his flock before;
Removes the rocky mountain from the door, 371
And shuts again: with equal ease dispos'd,
As a light quiver's lid is op'd and clos'd.
His giant voice the echoing region fills:
His flocks, obedient, spread o'er all the hills. 375
Thus left behind, e'en in the last despair
I thought, devis'd, and *Pallas* heard my prayer.
Revenge, and doubt, and caution work'd my breast;
But this of many counsels seem'd the best:
The monster's club within the cave I spy'd, 380
A tree of stateliest growth, and yet undry'd,
Green from the wood; of height and bulk so vast,
The largest ship might claim it for a mast.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 253

This shorten'd of its top, I gave my train
 A fathom's length, to shape it and to plain; 385
 The narrow'r end I sharpen'd to a spire;
 Whose point we harden'd with the force of fire,
 And hid it in the dust that strow'd the cave.
 Then to my few companions, bold and brave,
 Propos'd, who first the vent'rous deed should try,
 In the broad orbit of his monstrous eye 391
 To plunge the brand, and twirl the pointed wood,
 When slumber next should tame the man of blood.
 Just as I wish'd, the lots were cast on four:
 Myself the fifth. We stand and wait the hour. 395
 He comes with ev'ning: all his fleecy flock
 Before him march, and pour into the rock:
 Not one, or male or female staid behind;
 (So fortune chanc'd, or so some God design'd)

✧. 394. *The lots were cast* ———] *Ulysses* bids his friends to cast lots; this is done to shew that he would not voluntarily expose them to so imminent danger. If he had made the choice himself, they whom he had chosen might have thought he had given them up to destruction, and they whom he had rejected might have judged it a stain upon them as a want of merit, and so have complained of injustice; but by this method he avoids these inconveniencies.

✧. 399. *Or so some God design'd.*] *Ulysses* ascribes it to the influence of the Gods that *Polypheme* drives the whole flock



254 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book ix.

Then heaving high the stone's unwieldy weight, 400
He roll'd it on the cave, and clos'd the gate.
First down he sits, to milk the woolly dams,
And then permits their udder to the lambs.
Next seiz'd two wretches more, and headlong cast,
Brain'd on the rock ; his second dire repast. 405
I then approach'd him reeking with their gore,
And held the brimming goblet foaming o'er :
Cyclop! since human flesh has been thy feast,
Now drain this goblet, potent to digest .
Know hence what treasures in our ship we lost, 410
And what rich liquors other climates boast.
We to thy shore the precious freight shall bear,
If whom thou send us, and vouchsafe to spare.
But oh ! thus furious, thirsting thus for gore,
The sons of men shall ne'er approach thy shore, }
And never shalt thou taste this Nectar more. 416 }

into his den, and does not separate the females from the males as he had before done ; for by this accident *Ulysses* makes his escape, as appears from the following part of the story. *Homer* here uses the word ὄϊσάμηνος, to shew the suspicion which *Polypheme* might entertain that *Ulysses* had other companions abroad who might plunder his flocks ; and this gives another reason why he drove them all into his cave, namely for the greater security.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 255

He heard, he took, and pouring down his throat
 Delighted, swill'd the large luxurious draught.
 More ! give me more, he cry'd : the boon be thine,
 Whoe'er thou art that bear'st celestial wine ! 420
 Declare thy name ; not mortal is this juice,
 Such as th' unblest *Cyclopean* climes produce,
 (Tho' sure our vine the largest cluster yields,
 And *Jove's* scorn'd thunder serves to drench our
 fields)

But this descended from the blest abodes, 425
 A rill of Nectar, streaming from the Gods.

He said, and greedy grasp'd the heady bowl,
 Thrice drain'd, and pour'd the deluge on his soul.
 His sense lay cover'd with the dozy fume ;
 While thus my fraudulent speech I reassume. 430
 Thy promis'd boon, O *Cyclop* ! now I claim,
 And plead my title : *Noman* is my name.

℥. 432. — — *Noman is my name.*] I will not trouble the Reader with a long account of *ἄνις* to be found in *Eustathius*, who seems delighted with this piece of pleasantry ; nor with what *Dacier* observes, who declares she approves of it extremely, and calls it a very happy imagination. If it were modesty in me to dissent from *Homer*, and two Commentators, I would own my opinion of it, and acknowledge the whole to be nothing but a collusion of words, and fitter to



By that distinguish'd from my tender years,
 'Tis what my parents call me, and my peers.

The Giant then. Our promis'd grace receive, 435
 The hospitable boon we mean to give :
 When all thy wretched crew have felt my pow'r,
Noman shall be the last I will devour.

He said : then nodding with the fumes of wine
 Dropt his huge head, and snoring lay supine. 440
 His neck obliquely o'er his shoulders hung,
 Prest with the weight of sleep that tames the strong !

have place in a Farce or Comedy, than in Epick Poetry. *Lucian* has thus used it, and applied it to raise laughter in one of his facetious dialogues. The whole wit or jest lies in the ambiguity of ἄνθρωπος, which *Ulysses* imposes upon *Polypheme* as his own name, which in reality signifies *No Man*. I doubt not but *Homer* was well pleased with it, for afterwards he plays upon the word, and calls *Ulysses* ἑτιδανὸς ἄνθρωπος. But the faults of *Homer* have a kind of veneration, perhaps like old age, from their antiquity.

Euripides has translated this whole passage in his Tragedy, called the *Cyclops*. The Chorus begins thus, *Why dost thou thus cry out, Cyclops ?* Cyc. *I am undone.* Cho. *You seem to be in a woful condition.* Cyc. *I am utterly miserable.* Cho. *You have been drunk and fallen into the embers.* Cyc. *Noman has undone me.* Cho. *Well then, No man has injured you.* Cyc. *Noman has blinded me.* Cho. *Then you are not blind.*

This appears to me more fit for the two *Sofias* in *Plautus*, than for Tragick or Epick Poetry ; and I fancy an Author who should introduce such a sport of words upon the stage, even in the Comedy of our days, would meet with small applause.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 257

There belcht the mingled steams of wine and blood,
 And human flesh, his indigested food.
 Sudden I stir the embers, and inspire 445
 With animating breath the seeds of fire ;
 Each drooping spirit with bold words repair,
 And urge my train the dreadful deed to dare.
 The stake now glow'd beneath the burning bed
 (Green as it was) and sparkled fi'ry red. 450
 Then forth the vengeful instrument I bring ;
 With beating hearts my fellows form a ring.
 Urg'd by some present God, they swift let fall
 The pointed torment on his visual ball.
 Myself above them from a rising ground 455
 Guide the sharp stake, and twirl it round and round.
 As when a shipwright stands his workmen o'er,
 Who ply the wimble, some huge beam to bore ;

ψ. 458. *Who ply the wimble.*] This and the following comparison are drawn from low life, but ennobled with a dignity of expression. Instead of ἐλοντες, *Aristarchus* reads ἐχοτες, as *Eustathius* informs us. The similitudes are natural and lively, we are made spectators of what they represent. *Sophocles* has imitated this, in the Tragedy where *OEdipus* tears out his own eyes ; and *Euripides* has transferred this whole adventure into his *Cyclops* with very little alteration, and in particular the former comparison. But to instance in all that



258 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

Urg'd on all hands it nimbly spins about,
 The grain deep-piercing till it scoops it out: 460
 In his broad eye so whirls the fi'ry wood;
 From the pierc'd pupil spouts the boiling blood;
 Sindg'd are his brows; the scorching lids grow
 black;

The gelly bubbles, and the fibres crack.
 And as when Arm'rcrs temper in the ford 465
 The keen-edg'd pole-ax, or the shining sword,
 The red-hot metal hisses in the lake,
 Thus in his eyeball his'd the plunging stake.
 He sends a dreadful groan: the rocks around
 'Thro' all their inmost winding caves resound. 470
 Scar'd we receded. Forth, with frantick hand
 He tore, and dash'd on earth the goary brand:
 Then calls the *Cyclops*, all that round him dwell,
 With voice like thunder, and a direful yell.

Euripides has imitated, would be to transcribe a great part of that Tragedy. In short, this Episode in general is very noble; but if the Interlude about *Οἶτρος* be at all allowable in so grave and majestick a Poem, it is only allowable because it is here related before a light and injudicious assembly; I mean the *Phæacians*, to whom any thing more great or serious would have been less pleasing; so that the Poet writes to his audience. I wonder this has never been offered in defence of this low entertainment.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 259

From all their dens the one-ey'd race repair, 475
 From rifted rocks, and mountains bleak in air.
 All haste assembled, at his well-known roar,
 Enquire the cause, and croud the cavern door.

What hurts thee, *Polypheme*? what strange
 affright 479

Thus breaks our slumbers, and disturbs the night?
 Does any mortal in th' unguarded hour
 Of sleep, oppresses thee, or by fraud or pow'r?
 Or thieves insidious the fair flock surprise?
 Thus they: the *Cyclop* from his den replies. 484

Friends, *Noman* kills me; *Noman* in the hour
 Of sleep, oppresses me with fraudulent pow'r.

“ If no man hurt thee, but the hand divine

“ Inflict disease, it fits thee to resign:

“ To *Jove* or to thy father *Neptune* pray,

The brethren cry'd, and instant strode away. 490

Joy touch'd my secret soul, and conscious heart,
 Pleas'd with th' effect of conduct and of art.

Meantime the *Cyclop*, raging with his wound,
 Spreads his wide arms, and searches round and
 round:



260 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book ix.

At last, the stone removing from the gate, 495
With hands extended in the midst he sat :

And search'd each passing sheep, and felt it o'er,
Secure to seize us ere we reach'd the door.

(Such as his shallow wit, he deem'd was mine)

But secret I revolv'd the deep design ; 500

'Twas for our lives my lab'ring bosom wrought ;
Each scheme I turn'd, and sharpen'd ev'ry
thought ;

This way and that, I cast to save my friends,

'Till one resolve my varying counsel ends.

495. — — *The stone removing from the gate.*] This conduct of *Polypheme* may seem very absurd, and it looks to be improbable that he should not call the other Giants to assist him, in the detection of the persons who had taken his sight from him ; especially when it was now day-light, and they at hand. *Eustathius* was aware of the objection, and imputes it to his folly and dullness. *Tully*, 5 *Tuscul.* gives the same character of *Polypheme* ; and because it vindicates *Homer* for introducing a speech of *Polypheme* to his Ram ; I will beg leave to transcribe it. *Tiresiam, quem sapientem fingunt poetæ, nunquam inducunt deplorantem Cæcitatem suam ; at verò Polyphemum Homerus, cum immanem ferumque finxisset, cum ariete etiam colloquentem facit, ejusque laudare fortunas, quod quâ vellet, ingredi posset, & quæ vellet attingere : recte hic equidem ; nihilo enim erat ipse Cyclops quam aries ille prudentior.* This is a full defence of *Homer* ; but *Tully* has mistaken the words of *Polypheme* to the Ram, for there is no resemblance to *ejus laudare fortunas, quod quâ vellet ingredi posset, &c.* I suppose *Tully* quoted by memory.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 261

Strong were the Rams, with native purple fair,
Well fed, and largest of the fleecy care. 506
These three and three, with osier bands we ty'd,
(The twining bands the *Cyclops* bed supply'd)
The midmost bore a man; the outward two
Secur'd each side: so bound we all the crew. 510
One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock;
In his deep fleece my grasping hands I lock,

ψ. 511. *One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock.*] This passage has been misunderstood, to imply that *Ulysses* took more care of himself than of his companions, in chusing the largest ram for his own convenience; an imputation unworthy of the character of an Hero. But there is no ground for it, he takes more care of his friends than of his own person, for he allots them three sheep, and lets them escape before him. Besides, this conduct was necessary; for all his friends were bound, and, by chusing this ram, he keeps himself at liberty to unbind the rest after their escape. Neither was there any other method practicable; for he, being the last, there was no person to bind him. *Eustathius*.

The care *Ulysses* takes of his companions agrees with the character of *Horace*.

“Dum sibi, dum fociis reditum parat, aspera multa
“Pertulit”——

But it may seem improbable that a Ram should be able to carry so great a burthen as *Ulysses*; the generation of sheep, as well as men, may appear to have decreased since the days of *Ulysses*. *Homer* himself seems to have guarded against this objection, he describes these sheep as εὐτρεφείς, καλοὶ, μεγάλοι; the Ram is spoken of as μακρὰ βιβὰς, (an expression applied to



262 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

And fast beneath, in woolly curls inwove,
 There cling implicit, and confide in *Jove*.
 When rosy morning glimmer'd o'er the dales, 515
 He drove to pasture all the lusty males :
 The ewes still folded, with distended thighs
 Unmilk'd, lay bleating in distressful cries.
 But heedless of those cares, with anguish stung,
 He felt their fleeces as they pass'd along. 520
 (Fool that he was) and let them safely go,
 All unsuspecting of their freight below.

The master Ram at last approach'd the gate,
 Charg'd with his wool, and with *Ulysses'* fate.
 Him while he past the monster blind bespoke : 525
 What makes my ram the lag of all the flock ?

Ajax, as *Eustathius* observes, in the *Iliad*.) History informs us of sheep of a very large size in other countries, and a Poet is at liberty to chuse the largest, if by that method he gives his story a greater appearance of probability.

*. 517. *The ewes still folded,———*
Unmilk'd, lay bleating ——]

This particularity may seem of no importance, and consequently unnecessary : but it is in Poetry as in Painting ; they both with very good effect use circumstances that are not absolutely necessary to the subject, but only appendages and embellishments. This particular has that effect, it represents Nature, and therefore gives an air of truth and probability to the story. *Dacier*.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 263

First thou were wont to crop the flow'ry mead,
First to the field and river's bank to lead,
And first with stately step at evening hour
Thy fleecy fellows usher to their bow'r. 530

Now far the last, with pensive pace and slow
Thou mov'st, as conscious of thy master's woe!
Seest thou these lids that now unfold in vain?
(The deed of *Noman* and his wicked train)

Oh! didst thou feel for thy afflicted Lord, 535
And wou'd but Fate the pow'r of speech afford;
Soon might'st thou tell me, where in secret here
The dastard lurks, all trembling with his fear:
Swung round and round, and dash'd from rock
to rock,

His batter'd brains shou'd on the pavement
smoke. 540

No ease, no pleasure my sad heart receives,
While such a monster as vile *Noman* lives.

The Giant spoke, and thro' the hollow rock
Dismiss'd the Ram, the father of the flock.
No sooner freed, and thro' th' enclosure past, 545
First I release myself, my fellows last:



264 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

Fat sheep and goats in throngs we drive before,
And reach our vessel on the winding shore.

With joy the sailors view their friends return'd,
And hail us living whom as dead they mourn'd. 550
Big tears of transport stand in ev'ry eye :

I check their fondness, and command to fly.
Aboard in haste they heave the wealthy sheep,
And snatch their oars, and rush into the deep.

Now off at sea, and from the shallows clear, 555
As far as human voice cou'd reach the ear ;
With taunts the distant giant I accost,
Hear me, oh *Cyclop* ! hear ungracious host !
'Twas on no coward, no ignoble slave,
Thou meditat'st thy meal in yonder cave ; 560
But one, the vengeance fated from above
Doom'd to inflict ; th' instrument of *Jove*.
Thy barb'rous breach of hospitable bands,
The God, the God revenges by my hands.

These words the *Cyclop*'s burning rage provoke :
From the tall hill he rends a pointed rock ; 566
High o'er the billows flew the massy load,
And near the ship came thund'ring on the flood.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 265

It almost brush'd the helm, and fell before: 569
The whole sea shook, and reflux beat the shore.

ψ. 569. *It almost brush'd the helm, &c.*] The Antients, remarks *Eustathius*, placed an Obelisk and Asterism before this verse; the former, to note that they thought it misplaced; the latter, to shew that they looked upon it as a beauty. Apparently it is not agreeable to the description; for how is it possible that this huge rock falling *before* the vessel should endanger the rudder, which is in the stern? Can a ship sail with the stern foremost? Some ancient Criticks, to take away the contradiction, have asserted that *Ulysses* turned his ship to speak to *Polypheme*; but this is absurd, for why could not *Ulysses* speak from the stern as well as from the prow; it therefore seems that the verse ought to be entirely omitted, as undoubtedly it may without any chasm in the Author. We find it inserted a little lower, and there it corresponds with the description, and stands with propriety.

But if we suppose that the ship of *Ulysses* lay at such a distance from the cave of *Polypheme*, as to make it necessary to bring it nearer, to be heard distinctly; then indeed we may solve the difficulty, and let the verse stand: for if we suppose *Ulysses* approaching towards *Polypheme*, then the rock may be said to be thrown before the vessel, that is, beyond it, and endanger the rudder, and this bears some appearance of probability.

This passage brings to my memory a description of *Polypheme* in *Apollonius, Argonaut. I.*

Κεῖν' ἀνὴρ καὶ πόντις ἐπὶ γλαυκοῦ δέεσκεν
Οἴδμαλ', ἔδ' ἑξοὺς βάπτεν πόδας ἀλλ' ὅσον ἄκροις
"Ἰχθεσι τεύγόμεν' διερχόμενον πεφύρητο κελυθῶ.

If *Polypheme* had really this quality of running upon the waves, he might have destroyed *Ulysses* without throwing this mountain; but *Apollonius* is undoubtedly guilty of an absurdity, and one might rather believe that he would sink the earth at every step, than run upon the waters with such



266 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

The strong concussion on the heaving tide
 Roll'd back the vessel to th' Island's side :
 Again I shov'd her off; our fate to fly,
 Each nerve we stretch, and ev'ry oar we ply.
 Just 'scap'd impending death, when now again 575
 We twice as far had furrow'd back the main,
 Once more I raise my voice; my friends afraid
 With mild entreaties my design dissuade.
 What boots the god-less Giant to provoke?
 Whose arm may sink us at a single stroke. 580
 Already, when the dreadful rock he threw,
 Old Ocean shook, and back his surges flew.
 The sounding voice directs his aim again;
 The rock o'erwhelms us, and we 'scap'd in vain.
 But I, of mind elate, and scorning fear, 585
 Thus with new taunts insult the monster's ear.

lightness as not to wet his feet. *Virgil* has more judiciously applied those lines to *Camilla* in his *Æneis*.

“ — — Mare per medium fluctu suspenſa tument
 “ Ferret iter, celeres nec tingeret æquore plantas.”

The Poet expreſſes the ſwiftness of *Camilla* in the nimble flow of the verſe, which conſiſts almoſt entirely of dactyles, and runs off with the utmoſt rapidity, like the laſt of thoſe quoted from *Apollonius*.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 267

Cyclop ! if any, pitying thy disgrace,
Ask who disfigur'd thus that eye-less face ?
Say 'twas *Ulysses* ; 'twas his deed, declare,
Laertes' son, of *Ithaca* the fair ;

590

Ulysses ; far in fighting fields renown'd,
Before whose arm *Troy* tumbled to the ground.

Th' astonish'd Savage with a roar replies :
Oh heav'ns ! oh faith of antient prophecies !

This, *Telemus Eurymedes* foretold,
(The mighty Seer who on these hills grew old ;

595

†. 595. *This, Telemus Eurymedes foretold.*] This incident sufficiently shews the use of that dissimulation which enters into the character of *Ulysses* : if he had discovered his name, the *Cyclops* had destroyed him as his most dangerous enemy. *Plutarch* in his discourse upon *Garrulity*, commends the fidelity of the companions of *Ulysses*, who when they were dragged by this Giant and dashed against the rock, confessed not a word concerning their Lord, and scorned to purchase their lives at the expence of their honesty. *Ulysses* himself, adds he, was the most *eloquent* and most *silent* of men ; he knew that a word spoken never wrought so much good, as a word conceal'd ; Men teach us to speak, but the Gods teach us silence ; for silence is the first thing that is taught us at our initiation into sacred mysteries ; and we find these companions had profited under so great a Master in silence as *Ulysses*.

Ovid relates this prophecy in the story of *Polypheme* and *Galatea*.

“ *Telemus* interea *Siculum* delatus in æquor,

“ *Telemus Eurymedes*, quem nulla fefellerat ales,



268 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

Skill'd the dark fates of mortals to declare,
 And learn'd in all wing'd omens of the air)
 Long since he menac'd, such was Fate's command,
 And nam'd *Ulysses* as the destin'd hand. 600
 I deem'd some god-like Giant to behold,
 Or lofty Hero, haughty, brave, and bold;
 Not this weak pigmy-wretch, of mean design,
 Who not by strength subdu'd me, but by wine.
 But come, accept our gifts, and join to pray 605
 Great *Neptune's* blessing on the wat'ry way:

“ Terribilem *Polyphemon* adit; lumenque quod unum
 “ Fronte geris media, rapiet tibi, dixit, *Ulysses* :
 “ Risit, et, O vatum stolidissime, falleris, inquit
 “ Altera jam rapuit : ”——

ψ. 603. *Not this weak pigmy-wretch* ——] This is spoken in compliance with the character of a Giant; the *Phæacians* wondered at the manly stature of *Ulysses*; *Polypheme* speaks of him as a dwarf; his rage undoubtedly made him treat him with so much contempt. Nothing in nature can be better imagined than this story of the *Cyclops*, if we consider the assembly before which it was spoken; I mean the *Phæacians*, who had been driven from their habitation by the *Cyclopeans*, as appears from the sixth of the *Odyssey*, and compelled to make a new settlement in their present country: *Ulysses* gratifies them by shewing what revenge he took upon one of their antient enemies, and they could not decently refuse assistance to a person, who had punished those who had insulted their fore-fathers.



BOOK IX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 269

For his I am, and I the lineage own :
Th' immortal father no less boasts the son.
His pow'r can heal me, and re-light my eye ;
And only his, of all the Gods on high. 610

Oh ! could this arm (I thus aloud rejoin'd)
From that vast bulk dislodge thy bloody mind,
And send thee howling to the realms of night !
As sure, as *Neptune* cannot give thee fight.

Thus I : while raging he repeats his cries, 615
With hands uplifted to the starry skies.
Hear me, oh *Neptune* ! thou whose arms are hurl'd
From shore to shore, and gird the solid world.
If thine I am, nor thou my birth disown,
And if th' unhappy *Cyclop* be thy Son ; 620

✧. 617. *The prayer of the Cyclops.*] This is a master-piece of art in *Ulysses* ; he shews *Neptune* to be his enemy, which might deter the *Phæacians* from assisting in his transportation, yet brings this very circumstance as an argument to induce them to it. O *Neptune*, says the *Cyclops*, destroy *Ulysses*, or if he be fated to return, may it be in a vessel not of his own ! Here he plainly tells the *Phæacians* that the prayer of *Cyclops* was almost accomplished, for his own ships were destroyed by *Neptune*, and now he was ready to sail in a foreign vessel ; by which the whole prayer would be compleated. By this he persuades them, that they were the people ordained by the Fates to land him in his own country.



270 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK IX.

Let not *Ulysses* breathe his native air,
Laertes' son, of *Ithaca* the fair.

If to review his country be his fate,
Be it thro' toils and suff'rings, long and late,
His lost companions let him first deplore; 625
Some vessel, not his own, transport him o'er;
And when at home from foreign suff'rings freed,
More near and deep, domestick woes succeed!

With Imprecations thus he fill'd the air, 629
And angry *Neptune* heard th' unrighteous pray'r.
A larger rock then heaving from the plain,
He whirl'd it round: it fung acrofs the main:
It fell, and brush'd the stern: the billows roar,
Shake at the weight, and refluent beat the
shore.

With all our force we kept aloof to sea, 635
And gain'd the Island where our vessels lay.
Our fight the whole collected navy chear'd,
Who, waiting long, by turns had hop'd and
fear'd.

There disembarking on the green sea-side,
We land our cattle, and the spoil divide: 640



f these due shares to ev'ry failor fall ;
 he master Ram was voted mine by all :
 nd him (the guardian of *Ulysses'* fate)
 ith pious mind to Heav'n I consecrate.

¶. 642. *The master Ram was voted mine —*] This perhaps might be a present of honour and distinction : but I could rather take it with *Eustathius* to be the Ram which brought *Ulysses* out of the den of *Polypheme*. That Hero immediately offers it in sacrifice to *Jupiter*, in gratitude for his forbearance ; an instance of piety to be imitated in more enlightened ages.

The book concludes with a testimony of this Hero's humanity ; in the midst of the joy for his own safety his generous heart finds room for a tender sentiment for the loss of his companions ; both his joys and his sorrows are commendable and virtuous.

Virgil has borrowed this Episode of *Polyphemus*, and inserted into the third of the *Æneis*. I will not presume to decide which Author has the greatest success, they both have their peculiar excellences. *Rapin* confesses this Episode to be equal any parts of the *Iliad*, that it is an original, and that *Homer* introduced that monstrous character to shew the Marvellous, and paint it in a new set of colours. *Demetrius Phalaris* calls it a piece of sublime strangely horrible ; and *Longinus*, even while he is condemning the *Odyssey*, allows this venture of *Polypheme* to be very great and beautiful ; (for so Monsieur *Boileau* understands *Longinus*, though Monsieur *Darriety* differs from his judgment.) In *Homer* we find a greater variety of natural incidents than in *Virgil*, but in *Virgil* a greater pomp of verse. *Homer* is not uniform in his description, but sometimes stoops perhaps below the dignity of Epic poetry ; *Virgil* walks along with an even, grave, and majestic pace : they both raise our admiration, mixed with delight and error.



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But the great God, whose thunder rends the skies
Averse, beholds the smoking sacrifice ; 64
And sees me wand'ring still from coast to coast
And all my vessels, all my people, lost !

While thoughtless we indulge the genial rite
As plenteous cates and flowing bowls invite ; 650
'Till evening *Phæbus* roll'd away the light :
Stretch'd on the shore in careless ease we rest,
'Till ruddy morning purpled o'er the east.
Then from their anchors all our ships unbind,
And mount the decks, and call the willing wind
Now rang'd in order on our banks, we sweep 65
With hasty strokes the hoarse resounding deep
Blind to the future, pensive with our fears,
Glad for the living, for the dead in tears.

THE END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.